CASE STUDY

ST MARY'S PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL (4-11)



This case study describes how the school used the self-evaluation framework for Principle 5 to reflect on how opportunities for children's voices to be heard are provided. This process also allowed them to consider what more could be done to improve the process of monitoring these opportunities and give feedback to the children on how their views could influence actions within the school.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Mary's CE Primary & Nursery school is situated in the village of Shawbury in Shropshire. It is a member of Empower Trust, a network of unique and diverse church and community academies, dedicated to combining levels of expertise across academies to ensure an outstanding education for every child across the Trust. The school roll is 254 of which 58 (23%) are from Armed Forces families, many of whom come for short postings to the nearby military base RAF Shawbury, with whom the school has very strong links. The school's focus on service children is to ensure no child is disadvantaged due to the service of their parent

www.shawburystmarys.org.uk



https://www.scipalliance.org/thriving-lives-toolkit

SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

Emerging practice	Developing practice	Embedding practice
Schools with emerging practice will be actively reflecting on their activity and may be implementing actions to enhance their support, but to a small extent. School leaders will be **beginning** to raise awareness of what is needed to support Armed Forces children and young people more effectively and will be reflecting on the impact of their existing support strategies to strengthen these.	Schools with developing practice will be addressing this principle's question to a good extent, but this may be partial or yet to be enhanced through regular monitoring and evaluation. School leaders will have considered how they are addressing this principle's question and are taking steps to embark on a regular programme of reflection, monitoring and evaluation. Practice at this level is likely to be either **not fully embedded or consistently applied** by all staff, or both.	Schools with embedding practice will fully address this principle's question with well-established work that is routinely monitored and evaluated and showing evidence of impact. School leaders will have fully addressed this principle's question and regularly monitor, review and evaluate their strategies to demonstrate the impact. Practice at this level will be **both embedded and consistently applied by all staff.**

EXAMPLES FROM PRACTICE

5.1 *To what extent are Armed Forces children represented in school and other forums?*

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- The school ensures that children from Armed Forces families are represented in all pupil groups so that Forces children's voices are heard, and their views are well represented. These groups include the School Council, the Safer Schools and Safeguarding committees.
- Armed Forces children are given specific roles in these groups and House Captain responsibilities.
- Armed Forces children get specific pupil voice sessions consisting of Forces children only. This ensures their visibility within the school and that they have dedicated opportunities to have their voices heard.
- School visits and inspections include discussions with Armed Forces children.

5.2 *To what extent do Armed Forces children's voices inform your strategies, approach and actions throughout the school?*

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Feedback from pupil voice sessions and school forums ensure that views of Armed Forces children are considered by school leaders when considering points for school improvement and the school's Action Plan e.g. their huge input to developing Behaviour and Learning policies.
- There is a dedicated staff member for Armed Forces children to provide opportunities for them to talk about issues that may be affecting them and how they suggest that these could be addressed.
- The school celebrates and recognises the challenges Armed Forces children may face with parents deployed and the challenges they must overcome to be part of the school communities. This helps to ensure that Armed Forces voices inform the work across the whole school.

5.3 *To what extent do Armed Forces children feel heard and understood?*

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Armed Forces children participate in the *Month of the Military Child* activities where they have opportunities to have their voices heard and highlight their experiences of living in an Armed Forces family.
- Children who attend dedicated Forces Pupil voice sessions say they feel well listened to and that the school considers their views when discussing school improvements, policies and practices.
- They report that their ideas and suggestions for school assemblies are taken on board by school staff.

Service Children's Progression ALLIANCE

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5.4 *To what extent do you act on feedback and ideas from Armed Forces children?*

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Feedback from the dedicated Forces Pupil voice sessions provides useful information to leaders for school developments. Care is taken however to ensure that Armed Forces voices are considered in proportion to the voices of all school pupils.

5.5 *To what extent do you monitor and communicate your actions in response to listening to Armed Forces children?*

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Although the school provides opportunities for Armed Forces children to be listened to and have their voices heard, more is being planned to ensure that they understand what actions the school will take because of what they have said.
- There are plans to ensure that monitoring these children's ideas and the resulting actions taken are well-referenced in future action plans.

SCHOOL LEADER ADVICE

Aim to make children stronger and more confident especially in their learning and understanding their rights.

Aim to provide children with opportunities to work together, adopt a 'can do' attitude and an optimistic approach, being thoughtful towards the feelings, wishes and rights of themselves and others whilst having their voices heard and listened to.