CASE STUDY

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL (4-11)



SCHOOL CONTEXT

St Mary's C of E Primary School sits in the heart of Credenhill village in Herefordshire. There are 141 pupils on the school roll of which 56 (40%) are from Armed Forces families. Many parents work at the nearby British Army garrison of Stirling Lines which is the headquarters of the 22 Special Air Service and Special Reconnaissance Regiments. The site was formerly a Royal Air Force non-flying station known as RAF Credenhill. The school has very strong links with the local community, the church and Stirling Lines barracks.

https://www.credenhill.hereford.sch.uk/

This case study highlights how the school used Principle 5 to self-evaluate its approach to ensuring that Armed Forces children's voices are heard. The self-evaluation process also helped them identify areas for further improvement in this area.



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

- Four out of ten members of the School Council are children from Armed Forces families.
- The ECO Club includes two representatives from Armed Forces families.
- Four Armed Forces children attended an Army Benevolent Trust Choir event at Christmas in 2023.
- Armed Forces children attended a 10-4-10 club where they could spend 10 minutes talking about their daily lives and 10 minutes working together on physical fitness activities.
- The *Dandelion Club* (for Armed Forces children) runs weekly and provides an opportunity for children to get to know each other, feel part of a team because of their parents' employment and have a chance to get to know a trusted adult with whom they can share concerns or worries.
- The school has Year 6 prefects and playground leaders who are from Armed Forces families.
- Armed Forces children are involved in Girl's Connect, which focuses on well-being and everyday interests.

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

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- The school identified a need for Armed Forces children to come together as a distinct group to share their experiences, feelings and concerns. As a result, a 10-4-10 and *Dandelion Club* was established specifically for them. The children chose the word 'Dandelion' as this is a recognised Military symbol for Service children.
- The school has also employed a safeguarding and pastoral lead for Military children. The role is to make effective relationships with Armed Forces children, their parents and carers and to listen and advocate for them.

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

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- The school has put considerable resources into supporting the Armed Forces children. The next step is to monitor the impact of this, this is a developing area for the school.
- Pupil voice and parent voice surveys are delivered to parents and children annually.
- Feedback to the pastoral lead has been very positive from parents. A coffee morning was arranged to gain insight into the needs of the children and their families from the families' perspective.

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

- All feedback is acted upon and children shape the *Dandelion Club* with their thoughts and ideas. One child has created her own timetable of suggestions for each week.
- The school's pastoral lead is available to listen to and support all children when they need it.

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

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Frequent meetings with the Senior Leadership Team and class teachers ensure that the actions carried out by the pastoral lead are known by all.
- Weekly ideas collecting and problem-solving opportunities take place to influence future actions and developments.

SCHOOL LEADER ADVICE

'Have a named person responsible for the well-being of Military children and families.

Arrange events that include all children not just Military so everyone has an understanding of the unique way of life that our Military children lead.

Work together with local schools.

Build good relationships with your local garrison through the welfare team.'

At the Dandelion club, everyone has a chance to say how they are feeling.".

(Class 4 pupil)

I love Credenhill school – there is always someone around to talk with"

(Class 1 pupil)

Everyone's suggestions for club activities are listened to. "

(Class 6 pupil)