

CASE STUDY

DRAKIES PRIMARY SCHOOL (P1-P7)



SCHOOL CONTEXT

Drakies Primary School is situated in Inverness, the capital of Scotland's Highlands. Inverness has an Army Barracks close by and the school typically has many Armed Forces families on the roll. At the time of writing this case study, 10% of the 227 pupils in the school were from Armed Forces families. The headteacher is the named contact for Armed Forces families.

<https://sites.google.com/millburnacademy.org.uk/drakiesprimary>

This case study highlights how the school used Principle 7 to help evaluate how they keep their staff well informed about military matters that affect the school, and support staff in their understanding.



<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

7.1 To what extent do you have a named point of contact to help staff support Armed Forces children and families? - The head teacher is the main named point of contact. - An Armed Forces Support Worker also provides a point of contact for pupils from Armed Forces families. - Pupils, families and staff are all aware that the Head Teacher is the member of staff responsible for overseeing Armed Forces matters and that the Armed Forces Support Worker provides an additional point of support. This information is included in the school handbook and on the website. - The school shares regular information about military families through email, such as the <u>Highland Council Military Liaison Group (Education) (MLG) newsletter</u>, and makes it clear that families can reach out for support if they need it.	EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING
7.2 To what extent do you provide appropriate time for professional development around Armed Forces children? - Staff team meetings include opportunities for all staff to be kept informed and updated about the needs of Armed Forces children. Staff discuss challenges that families may be facing, such as upcoming deployments. - The school ensures that new members of staff have access to attainment data, which includes information about Armed Forces families and any academic/emotional support that is in place for their children or has been in place previously. - The headteacher regularly attends MLG meetings to keep staff up to date but also to make connections with other agencies in order to support the school's Armed Forces families. - School leaders attend multi-agency meetings to develop a greater understanding of the challenges facing Armed Forces families.	EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING
7.3 To what extent do you ensure that all staff and those with responsibility for school governance have access to high quality training about supporting Armed Forces children? - Highland Council's suite of <u>training materials</u> on supporting pupils from Armed Forces families is available to all staff. - Staff are aware of the Highland Council MLG website and are encouraged to access this for information, resources and training opportunities. - The headteacher keeps up to date with evidence-based developments and regularly attends MLG meetings to extend understanding of support that can be put in place for Armed Forces families.	EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING

7.4

To what extent do staff apply research and evidence-based resources in their support for Armed Forces children and families?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Leaders keep abreast of research and evidence-based resources (such as '[Living in Our Shoes](#)' report 2020) and other national publications. Key parts of these are shared with staff at meetings and training days.

7.5

To what extent do staff engage in local and national networks focused on supporting Armed Forces children and families?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- School leaders are active members of the Local Authority MLG (Education) which feeds directly into the Highland Armed Forces Covenant group.
- The MLG provides leaders with access to information from local and national networks.
- Leaders regularly meet with military personnel to keep up to date with battalion issues.

SCHOOL LEADER ADVICE

- We find the MLG extremely informative. It also allows us to form strong relationships with military personnel and external partners to ensure that we are aware of developments that may support our military families. I would urge any school with an opportunity to be engaged in a similar group to grab the opportunity with both hands.
- We keep our military families at the forefront of thinking and planning. If we can make our schools 'military family informed' then this will have a positive impact on so many military families that we are aware of and on the many who haven't self-identified themselves to us.

Knowing which of our families are Armed Forces families allows us to work with our partners to ensure we can offer the very best support possible. We are proactive in celebrating the work that our serving, veteran and reservist military families do. The work that has gone into creating our Remembrance and mindfulness garden has strengthened our links with the British Legion and with the Highland Military Liaison Group (MLG) further."
(Head Teacher)

Regular information sharing allows me to stay informed and support our Armed Forces families accordingly depending on the circumstances they are facing."
(Teacher)