

CASE STUDY

CRANWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL (4-11)



SCHOOL CONTEXT

Situated in rural Lincolnshire, five miles northwest of Sleaford, Cranwell Primary School is a co-educational, Local Authority maintained primary school for children aged 4 to 11 years. It has about 300 pupils on roll, of which approximately two-thirds are Service children owing to the proximity of Royal Air Force Cranwell, which was created along with the service itself in 1918. The school therefore serves two communities: the village of Cranwell, and the R.A.F. College and Station at Cranwell. The school has a tradition of settling in new pupils and giving each of them a sound reassuring base for their educational development with a varied and stimulating curriculum to capture their interest and support. Mobility, due to frequent pupil turnover, is a unique aspect of school life which the school manages extremely well: 35-45% of the school population may change within an academic year.

<https://www.cranwell.lincs.sch.uk/>

Service children achieve well at Cranwell Primary due to effective school-to-school transition arrangements, strong staff knowledge of the challenges of military lifestyle, and robust tracking of progress, leading to effective intervention and additional support. This case study provides evidence of how this is achieved.



<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

3.1

To what extent do you assess on entry and monitor Armed Forces children's achievement, learning gaps and preferences, support needs and interests and skills?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- New and prospective parents, along with their child, are encouraged to visit the school prior to entry whereby a good understanding of each child and their interests, skills and needs can be gained. Children with additional needs are **always** encouraged to visit the school in advance, to meet key staff.
- The school's SEND team works with parents to put in appropriate provision quickly for new children who would benefit from it. For children with specific needs, support and adjustments are discussed at weekly whole school staff communication meetings to ensure all staff share a common approach.
- Transition e-mails and telephone conversations are made with a new arrival's previous school, as needed, to add to any information received in educational records. An incoming child is then assessed by staff, usually within the first two days of entry.
- New children then join the existing assessment and monitoring process which the school follows, with formal pupil progress meetings taking place three times a year. Parents and careers are kept fully informed. Teaching adaptations and appropriate scaffolding of the curriculum is then made, in response to pupils' assessments.
- **SSAFA** (the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association charity) is also quickly accessed for some families for some additional support at the time of school-to-school transition.

3.2

To what extent do you address gaps and mitigate curriculum and qualification discontinuity?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Reviewing an incoming child's records and undertaking baseline assessments within his / her first week at the school allows specific areas of development to be identified, which may include whole sections of learning that have been missed (e.g. perimeter in mathematics). Targeted teaching can then be provided, inside and outside the classroom, to ensure the child narrows the gap to their peers. The pastoral and SEND team may be involved at any point during the process to ensure the child **and** parents receive the appropriate support and guidance.
- Group work and one-to-one support in class from a teaching assistant are often used to ensure children have the required help to close any gaps. **Shine** interventions can be accessed in the afternoons, which supports individual assessment data. (These are targeted interventions published by Hodder Education for primary reading skills, GPS, and mathematics, aimed at addressing specific gaps in understanding and to deliver targeted individual and group intervention activities, for Years 1-6.)
- Support in curriculum subjects beyond reading, writing and mathematics may be implemented as a reasonable / essential adjustment.

3.3 To what extent do you track and regularly review Armed Forces children's outcomes and progress, and tailor support in response?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Tracking of children's academic progress at Cranwell Primary is robust and expectations are high. School leaders have designed a bespoke Excel-based tracking system to support this.
- In end of Key Stage 2 Standard Assessment Tests (SATs), Service children's attainment and progress are typically at least in-line, if not above, that of the school's non-Service children. In 2023, the Year 6 Service children achieved impressive Average Points Scores of 109 in reading; 107 in Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar; and 106 in the mathematics test.
- Where children are not on track to achieve personal ambitious targets, leaders ensure that intervention and additional support is put in place swiftly and intervention is adapted, as needed, following careful monitoring of impact.
- School leaders review the school's Service children cohorts on a range of performance measures beyond just 'academics'. This includes reviewing attendance, behaviour, safeguarding concerns, participation in extra-curricular activities and mental health and wellbeing needs.
- The school strives to overcome **all** barriers for **all** children. For example, staff prompt parents and community members to support by sharing cars to get pupils to special events. PE events are run weekly and children's participation in these and clubs is tracked to ensure that they are fully inclusive.

3.4 To what extent do you address Armed Forces children's additional learning support needs?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- The SENDCO / pastoral team will meet any parents of children with additional needs prior to entry to the school to ensure there is a plan in place to allow these children to access their learning without barriers. When relevant, the pastoral team and / or SEND Team will continue to work closely with new families after their arrival to support the transition process and, if required, an Individual Education Support Plan, Health Care Plan and /or Lincolnshire Education Health Care (EHC) assessment is made after transition. Teachers liaise with parents of children with additional needs after their first day in detail and give feedback after approximately 3 weeks. Regular meetings with the SENDCO and class teacher will then be arranged. All children's progress, including that of Service children with additional needs, is tracked closely by the school's Assessment Coordinator.
- Many staff have a military connection or background. This helps with the school's general understanding of military-specific lifestyle factors including deployment, relocation and transition. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is provided for staff, as necessary, to enable them to have a good understanding of Service children to support them effectively.
- Where bespoke support is needed, the SENDCO or pastoral team will offer individual training or signpost relevant CPD for members of the staff team.
- Transition meetings take place prior to any child with additional needs moving to another school. These meetings involve the new school, the child and the parents.

3.5 To what extent do you celebrate prior learning and help Armed Forces children make the most of their strengths?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- School staff endeavour to minimise curriculum content repetition when children join the school and to provide opportunities for incoming children to share some of their previous learning in areas not covered at Cranwell so that this can be celebrated.
- The school's curriculum is designed to incorporate Cranwell and its locality, with this more personalised learning being part of staff's promotion of cultural capital.
- Assemblies and certificates are used to celebrate children's strengths and successes.

3.6

To what extent do you provide tailored careers and decision-making support for Armed Forces children?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- School staff encourage Armed Forces personnel to regularly take part in school events such as Experiences' Day, Safety Day and community events, as these help portray the life of Service personnel in a positive way. A number of military serving Parents also come in to lead after school clubs.
- Additionally, pupils regularly visit the local RAF bases to learn about vocations within the military. As such, close relationships are built between the school and the nearby base which allows children to benefit from activities and learning within the MOD.
- The school has good formal links with the Youth Liaison Officer on Camp, together with a significant number of informal links. These allow staff to work closely with the RAF on a variety of activities. For example, assemblies led by a Padre; Macmillan Mile; tree planting; attending the station's Wellbeing Wednesday concerts; and visiting the Station's College Hall Officers' Mess to learn about the history in the local area. To support mid-term transitions, staff ensure fair access to secondary schools, ensuring parents moving know about the 11+ and are signposted to appropriate support.

SCHOOL LEADER ADVICE

As a school, we strive for each child to reach their potential, with high expectations to ensure that all children aspire to show Courage, Perseverance and Success. We also strive to support the personal development of pupils with additional needs alongside their academic achievements.

The diverse nature of our staff includes parents from Service families as well as non-Service Families. This brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to support all the children at our school.