

CASE STUDY

SHIPTON BELLINGER PRIMARY (4-12)



SCHOOL CONTEXT

Shipton Bellinger Primary is a Local Authority school, situated close to the Garrison Town of Tidworth in Hampshire. The current school roll is 185, of which approximately 65% are from Armed Forces families, with some quartered in the village of Shipton Bellinger and the majority of others based at Tidworth. One member of staff has specific responsibilities for provision, support and outcomes for Armed Forces children, reporting to the governing body. A Service children governor role has also been established, with a clear monitoring and evaluation role.

<https://www.shiptonbellinger.hants.sch.uk/>

This Case Study highlights how Shipton Bellinger Primary School used Principle 4 to evaluate their transition procedures, and how these are aimed at quickly creating a strong sense of belonging for all new children.



[https://www.scipalliance.org/
thriving-lives-toolkit](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

4.1 To what extent does your school identify Armed Forces children? - Families are asked to self-identify on enrolment and are regularly given other opportunities to do so throughout the year (e.g. via e-mails and newsletters). This helps to ensure that appropriate support systems are available, when required. - Prominent display boards highlight Armed Forces children and their achievements both in and out of school.	EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING
4.2 To what extent do you work with outgoing and incoming Armed Forces families through the long transition process? - When families first make contact, information is shared about the school and its provision for Armed Forces children. - Upon arrival at the school, a full tour is given to the family by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, with introductions to the class teacher and children in the new child's class. - Leaders foster a sense of belonging by providing Armed Forces pupils with items including a book bag and school jumper. - On the first day, the family is welcomed by the class teacher, and the class teaching assistant is identified as a point of contact throughout the transition period.	EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING
4.3 To what extent do you welcome Armed Forces families, both before and after their moves, and ensure a positive experience from the first day? - Armed Forces pupils new to the school are allocated a buddy at the start of their first day. Children new to the Early Years Foundation Stage are allocated a buddy from Year 6. - Armed Forces children joining the school also receive a welcome letter from their new class. - Families are formally welcomed on the first day and introduced to all relevant staff. - A settling-in period is agreed with the family and a date for a follow-up meeting is arranged. - Welcome information for Armed Forces families is presented on the school's website.	EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING

4.4

To what extent do you work with Armed Forces children's previous or future schools to transfer records and find out about learning, wellbeing, achievements, interests, skills and their family context?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- The school has clear systems and procedures for the transfer of pupil records. This includes the transfer of both Child Protection and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) records.
- The school's Service Pupil Leader contacts the child's previous school to ensure that all relevant information is transferred, including achievements, well-being notes and interests.
- Teachers are proactive in gathering information to create an understanding of the child's prior learning journey during their first days in the school.
- When the Service Pupil Leader becomes aware that an Armed Forces child is due to leave Shipton Bellinger, she ensures that: any required assessments are carried out; the class teacher writes a leaving report; parents are provided with their child's school work to take to the new school; records and reports are passed on to the new school; and that all Child Protection and Special Needs records are sent directly to the child's new school.
- School staff also prepare the child for the upcoming move and discuss any worries he / she may have.

4.5

To what extent do you minimise discontinuity in additional support, for example by minimising re-assessment of needs?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- When an Armed Forces pupil requiring additional support is due to join the school, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) holds a number of key conversations with both the previous school and the child's parents, to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of the required provision and any specialist services involvement that may be needed.
- All paperwork (e.g. Education Health and Care Plans, provision plans, previous assessments) is requested and shared with all relevant staff.
- School staff use information from previous assessments and other records to ensure continuity of support and the intervention of specialist services as quickly as possible.

4.6

To what extent do you help Armed Forces children build new and maintain existing relationships?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Leaders have established several strategies to enable Armed Forces pupils to build and maintain relationships (e.g. buddies).
- All staff recognise the potential impact of deployments and transitions and are flexible by adjusting their teaching and support. This ensures pupils are appropriately supported during times of potential stress and additional needs.
- A buddy system and a letter from their new class provides all new Armed Forces children with connections from day one. This enables a more stress-free and smooth entry to school.
- *Lunchtime Calm Club* runs three times a week providing opportunities for Armed Forces children to engage socially, in a quiet environment. This is particularly useful when pupils are more stressed or worried and is a very effective way of helping children establish new friendships.
- *Camouflage Kids* (named by the children) is a club run weekly by trained members of staff to support the emotional health and wellbeing of Armed Forces children at the school. It provides a space for children to support each other and have a safe place to talk to peers who are facing the same issues.

SCHOOL LEADER ADVICE

“Tapping into the experience of staff members who have first-hand lived experiences of Service life is really beneficial. All staff should receive training on the transition process and how transitions can be affected by parental deployments. All staff need to understand that the transition process, preparing to move to another school and settling in to Shipton Bellinger can take a long time and that some children need quite a lot of support during these times.”

●● Pupils are flying high at this thoughtful and caring community school. Many pupils come from families who work in the Armed Forces and have had to change schools several times. Despite this, pupils have a strong sense of belonging. One pupil said, “Someone is always there for you. You learn about how you can cope with and overcome difficulties...There is a deliberate effort by school leaders to overcome the contextual barriers faced by Service families and all pupils settle quickly due to the exceptional support, guidance and clear expectations that run through the whole of the personal development programme”. (Ofsted 2023)