

## Armed Forces Support and Guidance for Schools

### Top Tips

**Check in with your forces families, it is helpful to have open lines of communication so you will be aware of operational absences or deployments.**

All too often, school and setting staff find out that Service children have a parent away on deployment or regularly away from home due to exercises only once issues have emerged. These can manifest themselves in a wide variety of ways, including Service children becoming more anxious and withdrawn, their behaviour deteriorating or homework deadlines being missed. For older children, a parent's absence may have significantly increased the expectations placed on them to support the lone parent at home. Depending on the nature and location of parental deployments, Service children may also be worried about their parent's safety, resulting in lower concentration and engagement levels at school. A reactive approach to providing tailored pastoral support is far less effective than a proactive approach.

### Discussions about current events in school

Discussions about global events may arise in school, particularly during periods of heightened tension. These conversations can increase anxiety for service children. When planning to address current events in the classroom, it may be helpful to inform forces families in advance so they can discuss the topics with their children at home. When watching Newsround or discussing the current situation be mindful of who the military children are and ask them whether they want to be included.

### Social Media and News Coverage

Many of us are feeling affected by the news coverage and content on social media. It may be useful to remind parents who have children with access to the internet that it is important to have open discussions with them about the content they are seeing. The increase in use of AI means there is more misinformation and realistic looking media which may be concerning, particularly for service families. Parents can find support on talking to their children about online content here:

[kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/online-content/](https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/online-content/)

## Resources and Support Services

### Naval Specific Support

**Naval Families Federation** – guidance and support in a broad range of areas affecting Naval family life: [nff.org.uk/contact](https://nff.org.uk/contact)

**Aggies** – Pastoral support for Naval families and community events. If your school is local to a base port, they may also provide sessions for school forces clubs: [aggies.org.uk](https://aggies.org.uk)

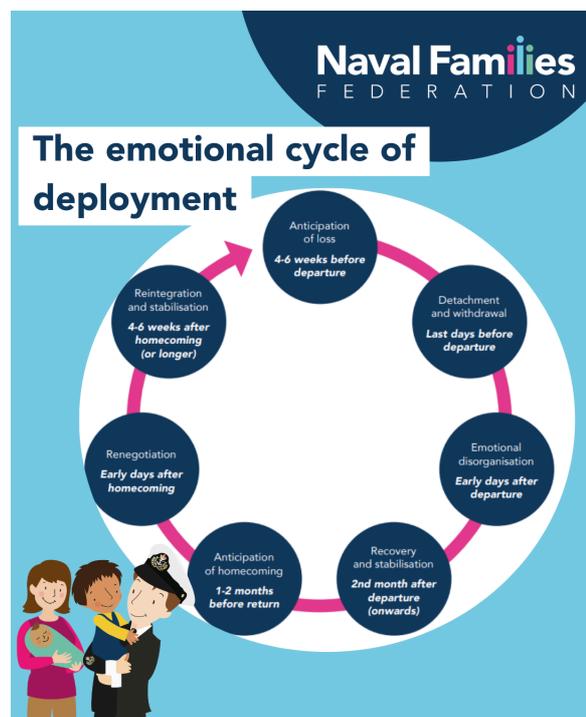
**Naval Children's Charity** – Support ranges from grants in their Emergency Essentials Grant Scheme to larger grants for more complex needs around disability and illness. Free resources and Wellbeing Packs: [navalchildrenscharity.org.uk](https://navalchildrenscharity.org.uk)

**Royal Navy Forum** – Information centre for service families sharing news, events and opportunities, login required: [forum.royalnavy.mod.uk](https://forum.royalnavy.mod.uk)

**Strengthening Families Booklet 2025** – lists service charities and support: [Strengthening Families Booklet 2025 Digital.pdf](#)

**Anchoring Minds** - Mental health and wellbeing support for Navy and Marines serving personnel and partners (18+ support only): [solentmind.org.uk/support-for-you/our-services/anchoring-minds](https://solentmind.org.uk/support-for-you/our-services/anchoring-minds)

**The Emotional Cycle of Deployment** is a useful resource exploring how adults and children of different ages may feel at each stage of a deployment. You can find out more in the **NFF Parental Absence Guide**. This also contains guidance for families dealing with the absence of service personnel, information on the emotional cycle of deployment: [6656-NFF-Parental-Absence-Guide-DI.pdf](#)



## Tri-service Support

**Little Troopers** – Resources and activities for schools and home: [littletroopers.net/](http://littletroopers.net/)

**Reading Force** – Free books and scrapbooks for service children:  
[readingforce.org.uk/](http://readingforce.org.uk/)

**NFF Recommended Reading Book List:** [Book-list-updated-Jan-24.pdf](#)

**SCiP Alliance** – enhancing support for service children’s education:  
[scipalliance.org/](http://scipalliance.org/)

**Service Children in State Schools** – Information and resources for schools in England:  
[sciss.org.uk/](http://sciss.org.uk/)

**Service Pupil Premium:** [gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium](http://gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium)

**Service Pupils in Schools** -Guidance for schools to understand and address the needs of service children in school: [gov.uk/government/publications/service-pupils-in-schools-non-statutory-guidance/service-pupils-in-schools-non-statutory-guidance](http://gov.uk/government/publications/service-pupils-in-schools-non-statutory-guidance/service-pupils-in-schools-non-statutory-guidance)

**Services Children's Champion** - practical guidance, tailored resources, and training opportunities for schools that make a real difference: [servicechildrenschampion.co.uk/school-support/](http://servicechildrenschampion.co.uk/school-support/)

**Combat Stress** - Mental health services for veterans: [combatstress.org.uk/](http://combatstress.org.uk/)

**Kooth in association with Ministry of defence** - A free, safe and anonymous mental wellbeing platform which allows young people aged 11-19, to chat with a friendly mental health practitioner, find support from a helpful community or access a range of self-help tools.: [kooth.com/mod](http://kooth.com/mod)

**Never Such Innocence** - A UK charity that gives children and young people around the world a voice on war and conflict, through poetry, art, speech and song. Provide resources for Month of the Military Child which takes place every April:  
[neversuchinnocence.com](http://neversuchinnocence.com)

Further guidance and education support: [nff.org.uk/advice/primary-and-secondary-education/](http://nff.org.uk/advice/primary-and-secondary-education/)

**Deployment Support** links: [deployment-resource-families-federations-v3-2025.pdf](#)

**If you are in need of further advice or support get in touch:**

[nff.org.uk](http://nff.org.uk) | [contactus@nff.org.uk](mailto:contactus@nff.org.uk) | 023 9265 4374