



Policy Document for Service Children.

At Stephen Freeman School, we are always looking at ways to support the children of our Servicemen and women. Service Children will join a school bringing with them a wide range of strengths and needs but, in many cases, will have, in addition, a variety of educational and personal experiences to provide an exciting and different dynamic. They may also have had or be going through experiences of a more stressful nature. The specific implications of providing for Service children and working with their families relate essentially to the issues of Mobility and Deployment. At Stephen Freeman school we believe that Service children should have access to multi agency support as well as that which we can offer as a school. One organisation that focuses on Service Children and their education is the Service Children Support Network. The Directorate Children and Young People (DCYP) is the focal point for all matters relating to Service children and young people. The Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) is an integral part of DCYP providing, on DCYP's behalf, information, advice and support on children and young people's issues.

At Stephen Freeman School, we believe it is important to:

- Have one-to-one opportunities for teachers and service children.
- Have more understanding of the individual students' abilities and situations, especially when moving to new schools.
- Have an area in school for students to use to *chill out* when parents are away so they can talk to others in similar positions.
- Encourage the children to create a memory book of the things they have done at school which could be sent to parents who are away.
- Encourage an inter-school pen pal system between friends from old schools.
- Allow time during the school day to talk to parents when they are deployed.
- Have a club for children from military service families.
- Allow students to have a picture of absent parents on their desk.
- Encourage fund raising for military families and injured soldiers.
- Have less homework and more time to spend with families.
- Hold meetings for military families to discuss what they are struggling with regarding their children, as well as what the children struggle with.
- Educate the other children about what the children from military families experience.
- Keep track of military children's education.
- Encourage the children to make cards for parents.
- Provide reflection time to help the children stay positive.

At Stephen Freeman School, we are aware that issues that are of concern to service children include:

- Parents being away
- Inappropriate play, eg gun play
- Friendships
- Self-esteem
- Turbulence – *always being the new kid*

Both parents serving
Moving around
Separation
Disruption of family life
Different issues/or none
Feeling *different*
Gaps in learning.

At Stephen Freeman School we address these concerns and issues by:

Giving them opportunities to talk.
Having forces bears.
Creating a forces club 'Circle of Friends' – lunchtime, once a week.
Having emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) support.
Creating drop-in sessions.
Having coffee mornings for the mums.
Time to write *e-bludies* (e-mails).
Engaging with Reading Force (www.readingforce.org.uk)
Raising awareness through assemblies.
Raising awareness of service life.
Engaging with the local regiments or bases.
Getting involved in National Armed Forces Day and Wear Your Uniform To Work Day.
Having a teddy that travels with Dad/Mum.
Having a world map so that children can indicate where relatives are.

At Stephen Freeman School we believe in developing and supporting all children, whatever context they live in.

A.E. Angel-Murray
October 2014

