

**Service Children's Progression**



## Creative Forces: a resource pack for HE providers

Creative Forces events offer Service children the opportunity to engage with higher education through a day of activities at a university campus and to explore their identity as Service children with others from a similar background but different ages and schools. It is also an opportunity to build the capacity of schools to understand and support their Service children.

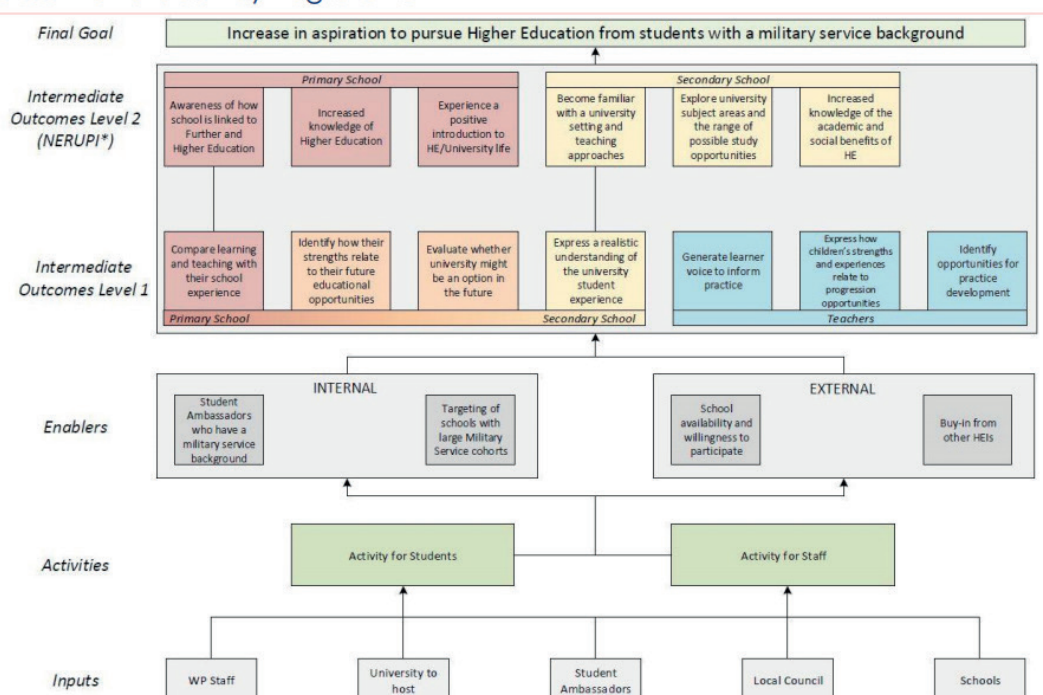
The University of Winchester has run this programme since 2014 and NCOP Higher York, based at York St John University, used and developed the model from 2018. It has since been run across the UK. This pack presents the experiences and ideas of outreach professionals and shares the resources they used to organise and run the events.

In 2019 the SCiP Alliance Practice Group worked together to evaluate that year's events. This pack draws on the results of that evaluation to inform future provision. Participants have indicated greater levels of awareness of the character and opportunities of university life and a clearer sense of whether and how they could progress to a range of destinations including higher education.

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### Creative Forces Day Logic Chain



\*Hayton, A., & Bengry-Howell, A. (2016). Theory, evaluation, and practice in widening participation: A framework approach to assessing impact. *London Review of Education*, 14(3): 41-53.

## What is Creative Forces?

There is no single formula for a Creative Forces event. The character of the day will be influenced by such factors as the host institution's subject expertise, the characteristics and needs of the local Service child population, and the needs of participating schools. Events are tailored towards either a primary school or secondary school audience. However, a typical Creative Forces event would involve activities such as: academic taster sessions; a tour of the HE campus; and opportunities for Service children to discuss their experiences and the support they receive at school. School staff may also be offered bespoke CPD and/or information sessions. Activities will be supported by student ambassadors who may themselves have military family backgrounds. Participants are typically selected by local schools, who will bring small groups of Service children and potentially also non-Service


## The rationale for working with children whose parent or carer works or has worked in the Armed Forces

Research by the University of Winchester suggests that Service children have particular experiences and characteristics that may be contributory factors affecting access to higher education. Many Service families repeatedly experience separation, deployment and mobility and Service children have an increased risk of other factors such as caring responsibilities. According to Office For Students guidance, "these issues may persist into the higher education experience, so providers may wish to consider the support they have in place to support students in this group. It may also be useful to reflect on how you could work with the wider community to track and inform this population".

## Organising a Creative Forces event for Service children: reflections from outreach officers

- In North Yorkshire we had support from the county's Service Pupil Champions; this was crucial in getting the message to the right person in schools
- In Hampshire we worked through the County Council's District Coordinator Network, established in a Covenant Grant project with the University of Winchester
- The opportunity to get to know Ambassadors from a Service background was key but Ambassadors from a variety of backgrounds show pupils could see that anyone can go to university, regardless of their background, and can gain an understanding of how diverse and inclusive university is.
- We plan to add more structure next year to how the primary school groups present their thoughts back to the rest of the groups and the teachers
- The CPD was well received by the teachers but there was quite a broad range of experience amongst participants. It might be worth being more specific in our letters to schools about who we recommend attends with the pupils
- Invite students from a range of schools – one of the biggest positives for the students was meeting other Service children who go to different schools.
- The costs and planning involved on the day are the same as any campus visit but establishing relationships with new schools took time.
- We had a mix of Year 9 and 10 at the secondary school event but it might be easier just to work with one year group to ensure the HE activities are well targeted.
- During any activity providing an opportunity for students to express their ideas and explore their experiences together, such as the top tips session, have as few university and school staff members in the room as possible; let student ambassadors lead the activity. We found this enabled the students to be more honest about their experiences.
- Include opportunities for Service children to mix with different schools and share their experiences. This could be during group sessions or on the campus visit.
- Subject taster sessions can be an indirect opportunity for Service children to share their experiences, allowing openings for discussion and creative expression of ideas, whilst also experiencing what studying within higher education could be like. In previous years, we have offered creative writing and journalism taster sessions.
- Engaging new schools is a challenge, particularly those far from campus.

- When feeding back about their 'top tips' during the larger primary schools day, we split the schools into two groups to ensure that everyone was able to present their ideas to teaching staff whilst maintaining the pace of the day.
- Additional feedback from partners MKC Heroes who have long experience of organising events for Service children is that weekending parents prefer events to be scheduled at the start or end of the week so that both parents can be there when their child comes home talking about it.
- Our secondary events were offered to students from Year 7 - 11. Messages about HE have to be carefully considered to ensure that the day is inclusive but this does give schools flexibility to include mobile students or to attend despite having a small Service child population.

 (The best thing about today was) the amazing relatable people!  
Meeting more Service children

(participant, York)

 I am now determined to get my Highers

(participant, Abertay)

## 2019 Evaluation findings

Findings offer evidence of a contribution to the following outcomes:

- **Compare learning and teaching with their school experience; Explore university subject areas and the range of possible study options**

Participants understood the differences between school and university post-event and academic taster activities were among the most memorable aspects of the day.

- **Identify how their strengths relate to their future educational opportunities**

Post-event students indicated a stronger sense that they were motivated to succeed in their studies.

- **Evaluate whether university might be an option in the future**

Students indicated a stronger sense that university was for people like them, and that they could go if they wanted to.

- **Express a realistic understanding of the university student experience**

Participants indicated significant increases in knowledge of student life and course options; qualitative responses included resolving worries or concerns

- **Awareness of how school is linked to further and higher education**

A number of participants suggested that the event had persuaded them to go to college and then university, and many identified routes to higher education.

- **Increased knowledge of higher education**

Participants demonstrated greater knowledge of HE, improved dispositions and a greater sense of having the opportunity to progress.

- **Experience a positive introduction to HE/university life**

Participants noticed the friendliness and respectful attitude of people on campus and understood the support available.

- **Become familiar with a university setting and teaching approaches**

Participants viewed immersion through taster sessions as beneficial.

- **Increased knowledge of the academic and social benefits of HE**

A strong awareness of the benefits of HE was reinforced.

 There are much more options for me than I knew about  
(participant, Abertay)



### CREATIVE FORCES 2018

The University of Winchester will be hosting Creative Forces days for primary and secondary pupils from service family backgrounds on 5<sup>th</sup> June (secondary pupils) and 7<sup>th</sup> June (primary pupils).

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUPILS:

- Visit a university campus, share experiences with current students and talk to lots of other people from service families.
- Give Hampshire's teachers your 'top tips' for supporting service children.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF:

- CPD session focused on supporting service children.
- Networking and sharing experiences with other professionals who support service children.

#### APPLICATION PROCESS:

Pupils should be from a service family background and should not have attended one of our previous Creative Forces events. Places are limited and will be issued on a first come, first served basis. We would ask each school to invite up to four pupils and one member of staff to attend.

Application forms are available for parents of pupils to complete and schools must return these to the University to secure places. An accompanying staff form will also need to be returned ahead of the event.


If there are any questions about the application process or anything about the days, please contact:

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## CREATIVE FORCES

For pupils from military service families in Hampshire

5th June – Secondary, 9.45-14.30  
7th June – Primary, 9.45-14.30




**Opportunities for pupils:**

- Visit a university campus, share experiences with current students and talk to lots of other people from service families.
- Give Hampshire's teachers your top tips for supporting service children.

**Opportunities for teachers:**

- CPD session focused on supporting service children.
- Networking and sharing experiences with other professionals who support service children.

Email [lauren.smith-birch@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:lauren.smith-birch@winchester.ac.uk) for more information on the application process.

Advertise to schools through the LA's school improvement team and direct approach to schools near local armed forces facilities.


### Do you come from a military service background?


If you understand the issues military families face, could you inspire and support local military service children?


We are running a 'Creative Forces' day for local military service children and their teachers on 20th April 2018, 10am - 2pm at York St John University.

We would like as many of our students who are from this background themselves to join us on this day, to make a difference to the lives of children both locally and nationally and share their own experiences with secondary school aged pupils.

Please get in touch if you would like to get involved.



Service Children's Progression  
 **ALLIANCE**

Reach out to your own university students from Service families






## Creative Forces Day

Friday 20th April 2018

<b>10am</b>	Arrival, registration and refreshments	Arts Foyer
<b>10:15am</b>	Welcome talk - <i>Louisa Dobson</i>	QS Hall
<b>10:30am</b>	What is HE? - <i>Emma Thomason and Heather Cooper</i>	QS Hall
<b>11:15am</b>	Supporting Service Children Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative Collage 'Top Tips'</li> <li>• Effective practice workshop</li> </ul>	QS Hall CD103
<b>12:30pm</b>	Lunch	SU Bar
<b>1:15pm</b>	Campus Tour	
<b>1:45pm</b>	Evaluation and close	QS Hall
<b>2pm</b>	Coach departs	

 Today was awesome and I would like to come back here when I am 18 because I have learnt lots of things today and it was really fun.  
Rating 10/10. (participant, York)

# CREATIVE FORCES 2018

PRIMARY – 7<sup>TH</sup> JUNE

Programme:

Timings:	Activity:	Location:
9:45	Arrivals and registrations	The Stripe Foyer
10:00	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Brief Welcome talk by University staff</li></ul>	Stripe Auditorium
10:10	Sharing experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Session with current University students from military service families, including the opportunity for a Q&amp;A</li></ul>	SS1 SS2
10:40	Refreshments break	SS1 SS2
10:50	Journalism taster session  Campus tour	SAB 201  Starting in SS1
11:35	Journalism taster session  Campus tour	SAB 201  Starting from SAB 201
12:20	Lunch	The Vault
12:50	Supporting Service Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Top Tips – Pupils to work with ambassadors to generate ideas for how schools can support them better</li><li>CPD session for school staff delivered by the RAF-FF</li></ul>	'Top Tips' – SS1 and SS2 CPD session – Stripe Auditorium
13:40	Feedback from pupils <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pupils feedback on their 'Top Tips' to school staff</li></ul>	SS1 and SS2
14:15	Close and evaluation	Stripe Auditorium
14:30	Departures	Stripe Foyer

## YOUR TOP TIPS!

Do you like to talk about your military connection or do you find it difficult?

Do you choose to spend time with other children from military service families? Does it help you?

Would you like more opportunity to meet other children from military service families?

How could schools help when you move?

How do you feel when your parent is deployed?

How could schools help and encourage you?

What does your school do that others should be doing?

### TIPS:

You could start by writing some of your answers on this sheet first then find creative ways to put them on your collage.

Feel free to cut out the questions and stick them onto your collage.

If you can't think of what to say, use the books and magazines and cut out pictures and words that describe how you feel.

**SUPPORT**  
**ADVICE** **TALK**  
**MOBILITY**  
**DEPLOYMENT**  
**ACTIVITIES**  
**FRIENDS**  
**UNDERSTANDING**  
**TEACHERS**  
**CLASSMATES**

## What Service children tell us:

Students value the opportunity to think through their experiences during these events and are keen to share their ideas, such as:

- They want to be understood; by their peers, by their teachers and by their community
- It can be hard when one parent is away or a move is on the horizon; schools need to keep that context in mind
- Opportunities to explore their experiences and identity with other Service children in a safe environment are invaluable
- Talking to ambassadors from a Service background at a Creative Forces event is beneficial
- Designated clubs and areas in school are important but at the same time secondary students in particular are keen not to be singled out
- It's important to have access to a member of staff who understands
- Awareness of family circumstances such as a parent's deployment is very important
- Schools have a key role to play in easing the pain of mobility



## What's on Today



10.00	Welcome to Abertay
10.30	Campus Tour
10.50	Pupils – Sharing Experience
	Staff – Alternative Routes
11.30	Academic Taster Sessions
	A Cup of Coffee
	The Key to Survival
	To be a Hacker
	Crime Scene Investigation
12.10	Lunch
12.55	Mental Health Workshop
13.40	Top Tips for Everyone
14.10	Evaluations
14.30	Close

[abertay.ac.uk](http://abertay.ac.uk)



## Student Ambassador Briefing Sheet Creative Forces Day

### Outline:

The aim of the day is to provide a taster of HE for your pupils, and will also give them an opportunity to get to know service children from their own and other schools. We hope that by attending this event, pupils will gain more knowledge of what university is, and have had the chance to talk about their experience of being a service child within their community/school and how they can feel more supported and/or how they want to be treated.

### Summary:

Event title:	Creative Forces Day	
Department:	NCOP	
Date:	20th April 2018	
SA start time		
Event start time		
Event finish time		
SA finish time		
SA Meeting Point		
Lunch Provided?	Yes	<i>NB: Let me know if you have any dietary requirements</i>
Contact during shift		
Ambassadors:		



KNOW | BECOME | CHOOSE | UNDERSTAND | PRACTICE





### Creative Forces Day – student follow up session

1. Welcome and aims of the session
  - a. Briefly explain that this is a follow up to the creative forces day they attended and tell them what they will be doing during the session
2. Ice-breaker
  - a. Do a quick 10 – 15 minute game/activity to get the students engaged. At the creative forces day they did a session on 'what is HE' so you could do something around this. Some examples below:
    - i. 2 truths, 1 lie
    - ii. "What is the first word you think of when you think of HE"
3. Brainstorming
  - a. Ask students to come up with their ideas for what they might want the poster/flyer to look like.
  - b. Explain that as there is more than one school involved explain that their design will be one side of the poster. (Each school has a different theme, so there won't be any crossover.
  - c. Show them some examples of posters/flyers, templates, pictures from puzzles etc.. to get the conversation started.
  - d. Things they might want to consider are:
    - i. Colour scheme – lots of colour/plain/black etc.
    - ii. Real photos or drawings – do they want to be in it? If so get a teacher to take the photos and get permission to use them. IF someone is a good artist could they create something
    - iii. What layout do they want?
    - iv. Do they want to write a title/sub headings etc.?
    - v. Students at Richmond can also be shown what SFX have designed.
  - e. Get the students to write down the final plan on some A4 paper.
4. Activity
  - a. Explain that they will be using the collages they made on 20<sup>th</sup> April and the posters made on the Primary School day.
  - b. Students can work in groups, pairs or together.
  - c. Using the post it notes students will pick out the best quotes/phrases from the collages that they want to use for their poster/flyer. They can also come up with their own.
  - d. Each school will be working on a different theme:
    - i. Issues that are important to them – St Francis Xavier
    - ii. Top Tips from Armed Forces Pupils – Richmond School
  - e. When they've chosen their quotes they might need to then whittle it down again which they should do as a group. Eg. Taking out duplicates.
5. Design outline

Secondary School students from Richmond School and St Francis Xavier School designed a poster of 'top tips' drawing from all the ideas generated by their peers at the 2018 Creative Forces event. This was displayed in schools and the community in North Yorkshire to raise awareness.





An invitation:

The SCiP Alliance practice group coordinates resources and evaluation for this programme and is a UK-wide group of HEIs, local authorities, schools, colleges and military charities which meets in person twice a year and provides advice to the SCiP Alliance team and to each other throughout the year.

To find out more about the SCiP Alliance practice group or if you have any questions about the events please contact the Alliance ([info@scipalliance.org](mailto:info@scipalliance.org)):

[katherine.lawrence@winchester.ac.uk](mailto:katherine.lawrence@winchester.ac.uk)

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 [@scipalliance](https://twitter.com/scipalliance)  
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Get involved and make a  
difference to the children  
of our military families:  
[www.scipalliance.org](http://www.scipalliance.org)

THE SCiP ALLIANCE