



Supporting Service children to thrive

SCiP Alliance Annual Conference 2023

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Supporting Service children to thrive

SCiP Alliance Annual Conference 2023

The aim of today's workshop

This workshop will showcase case studies of young people who are currently being supported by the Forces Employment Charity. It aims to provide an understanding of why Service children require additional one-to-one career support, which is tailored to their specific needs. During the workshop, we will discuss the barriers and challenges faced by Service children and the importance of allowing them to identify themselves as Service children. By doing so, they will have access to a holistic bespoke support package that helps them increase confidence and self-awareness and achieve positive vocational outcomes.



Thriving Lives webinar series

Agenda

- Introductions
- Interactive exercise
- Forces Employment Charity
- University of Winchester
- What does the future look like?

To get us started...

Website: www.menti.com

Access code: **48 62 51 0**



Forces Employment Charity – Who We Are

The Forces Employment Charity provides life-long, life-changing support, job opportunities, and training to Service leavers, veterans, reservists, and their families, regardless of circumstances, rank, length of service, or reason for leaving.

Founded in 1885 and operating across the UK, we have the specialist knowledge and understanding to bridge the gap between military life and civilian employment. We work in partnership with other organisations and employers who, like us, respect and value the unique qualities and abilities of all those who have served.



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Forces Employment Charity – Our commitment to supporting Service Families

- MoD Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award 2023
- Cobseo The Confederation of Service Charities
- Targeted community outreach to Schools, Colleges and Sixth Forms



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Our Young People programme

We support young people aged 16- 24. Our expert employment advisors offer advice and guidance and work one-to-one, providing tailored career support.

Young people from Service families face a unique set of challenges. From being separated from parents, relocating to new areas, experiencing disruption to their education, and isolation, to being young carers – we understand! That's why we offer extra support in all aspects of education, training, and employment.

Our support does not stop when a family relocates, moves schools, or college, when they find employment, or when their parent leaves the Armed Forces. Our programme is there until they no longer need us.



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Factors that impact Service pupils

- Transitioning to a new setting
- Deployed parents
- Relocating
- Bereavement
- Moving on



Case Study

School referral

The Forces Employment Charity was contacted directly by a Year 9 Tutor as one of their Service children was struggling, since joining their school.

The Service child used to live with both parents in York and had attended an Independent boarding school. After moving to the Middle East, unfortunately, the parent's relationship broke down and they decided to separate. During this separation, he became disruptive at school and was diagnosed with ADHD, the school felt that they could no longer meet his needs, so he left and moved down South to live with his dad, who enrolled him at their local Secondary School.

Transitioning from one school to another was not a positive process. Resulting in him being disengaged with teachers and school. In his eyes, he feels like the teachers don't like him. He doesn't trust teachers because they "just want to get rid of him". He told us that he "just wants to feel normal".

He aspires to be a plumber and we have worked with the school to find him an alternative provision that gives him a day out of the classroom where he could attend a local college. We advised the school that this would be a fantastic use of Service Pupil Premium, as it could have a positive impact on his education. The school has found a local plumber whom he is shadowing to learn about the trade.

At the moment the school doesn't have a nominated member of staff or military champion that monitors and meets regularly with Service children. However, they have recognised the need and are working closely with us on how they can implement changes to provide Service children with the provision and support they need.



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Case Study

Ruby – Aged 18

Having to relocate to new Service Family Accommodation, due to her Dad's job, Ruby quickly found that being able to continue her 2nd year of studies at her current college was going to be difficult. A college closer to her new home, would only be an option if she was prepared to retake her first year as the subjects, she is currently studying are not available.

Ruby was put into a position to either choose new subjects to study and retake her first year or face a long commute to her current college, costing over £2000. For Ruby, she has worked extremely hard and wanted to complete her final year at her current college.

Ruby felt at the time the College was not supporting her emotionally, leading to extreme anxiety and low self-esteem. No one took the time to sit with Ruby to talk things through to ease the stress she was feeling.

We reached out to her college and found out who her progression mentor was to explain Ruby's situation and discuss how we could work together to find a manageable solution. The Forces Employment Charity is helping the family with grant applications to help cover some of the transport costs. To date, we have not been able to secure any funding. We are currently working with Ruby to help her rebuild her confidence and self-esteem. We have partnered her with an industry mentor as she aspires to be a solicitor.



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Case Study

Megan – Age

Megan registered for the charity's support in April. Having moved back to the UK from Cyprus, Megan was keen to find a part-time role whilst studying for her Diploma of Performing Arts. She had a CV which we worked on together to ensure it would pass through any ATS. She was unsuccessful at finding a job, despite applying to several retail and hospitality venues. We discussed the option of doing voluntary work so that she would have experience to put on her CV and Megan got a weekend job at Oxfam where she was tasked with sorting the books – this including pricing, researching to see if the books were valuable, and interacting with customers and colleagues. All these experiences increased Megan's confidence to have another go at finding paid employment. We worked on updating her CV and she applied for several hospitality roles. Despite a trial session with Five Guys, she was unsuccessful. However, she showed resilience and persevered, sending her CV to companies that were advertising locally and was eventually successful in acquiring a part-time role as a Food and Beverage Assistant at DoubleTree Hilton. She is enjoying the role and learning more skills to keep enhancing her CV.



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How to show your setting supports Armed Forces Families

- Dedicated page on your website for Military Families.
 - Explain what strategies are in place to support students
 - List resources
 - Signpost to other charities
 - Nominate a Service Child Champion – Main POC for families and students
 - Work with your local military base or Garrison

University Commitment to Service Children



We are proud to be at the forefront of work recognising and supporting Service children.

The University's commitment to Armed Forces children and families is seen in our:

- Leadership of the SCiP Alliance
- Community outreach
- Research and knowledge exchange
- Armed Forces Covenant pledge
- MoD Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award
- Armed Forces Breakfast Club
- Heritage for Heroes
- Member of Universities in Support of Wounded, Injured and Sick Service Personnel (UNSWIS) network
- Scholarship scheme providing discounted Masters study for ex-forces employees.

We have outlined this commitment in our new Access and Participation Plan (2024-2028).



Service-Child Centred

Championing 'Service Child Voice' since 2014

150+ new students identified as 'Service Children' at Enrolment (September 2022)

6.6% of University of Winchester applicants identified as Service Children **vs 3.8%** nationally
(UCAS January 2023 Deadline WP Report)



Research and **evidence led** activities and initiatives

Creative Forces Days



Forces Family Days



Positive Pathways to Higher Education for Forces Families

The 'Positive Pathways to HE' programme at the University of Winchester is a two-year long project under the EM3 Armed Forces Veterans and Families Programme.

In partnership with the Forces Employment Charity, the University of Winchester aims to support ex-forces, military families and reservists in exploring pathways into Further Education and Higher Education and build the skills and confidence to do so.

Positive Pathways to Higher Education for Forces Families

Needs assessment (Survey):

- 63.6% of participants were spouses/partners, 14.5% ex-forces, **10.9%** military child, 7.3% spouse/partner *and* ex-forces, 3.6% military reserve.
- 'Would you like to go to university in the future?' 65.5% answered 'yes' or 'maybe'.
- 'I want to get good qualification', 'I need to get university qualifications to get the job I want'.
- 'It is too expensive, '(university) does not necessarily guarantee you a job after graduating', and 'I want to avoid debt'.
- Financial information, informed decisions and careers guidance.

Positive Pathways to Higher Education for Forces Families

Needs assessment (focus groups):

- Lack of awareness of service pupil needs.
- Issues surrounding mobility and deployment.
- Family responsibility as a barrier to further learning.
- Military family support groups within their educational institution.
- Targeted events but also a greater awareness within the community of forces families.
- Staff awareness of who service pupils are.
- More information on the benefits of higher education.

Positive Pathways to Higher Education for Forces Families

Social media campaign:

- June - September 2023
- LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube
- 208% increase in number of followers on LinkedIn
 - Degree apprenticeships
 - Student Finance (repayments)
- 60.3% increase in followers on Instagram
 - 'What motivated you to talk about your experiences of higher education and being from an armed forces background?'
 - 2,363 accounts reached

Student Testimonials



Student Testimonials

“Being from a military family can be hard, and the impact of that family dynamic can be felt in numerous ways. It can be seen in the sadness that comes when big occasions like birthdays or Christmas’s are missed, or the dread and worry that creeps in when you know an upcoming deployment is looming and your loved one could be gone for months at a time. This is the harsh downside that befalls so many military households, however, this hardship brings strength and courage, and teaches you lessons that can help you not only navigate life but also prepare you for university”

“A huge part of being in the military is having discipline and this can be a huge advantage when coming to study at university. Undertaking a degree requires a lot of work, and what separates outstanding students from ordinary ones is having that discipline and getting the job done.”

Student Testimonials

“Although it seems that coming from a military background can be nothing but a disadvantage, those exact hardships forge the best and brightest of us and provide you with the skills necessary to help you get the most out of your degree.”

“My stepdad has been serving... during the time in which I had to make my decisions for life ... such as if and where I would attend university... deciding to come to university in the UK with my close family far away was a difficult decision, though was worth it, for the skills I have gained, the independence and the memories I have been able to make with friends and family, even if that is over FaceTime for the most part”

Student Testimonials

“From Primary school to my Undergraduate degree, I never once received support for being a member of a service family. Until recently, when I joined the University of Winchester to complete a postgraduate course. My experience of being from a service family is something that very much defines who I am, and I would not change that experience”

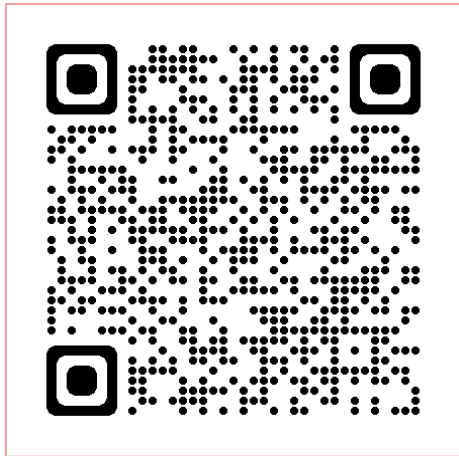
“Throughout the crucial stages of university applications and final exams, Dad was in a dark place. At the time, we were unaware that he was suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and without any medical help, his condition began to decline.

“...one piece of advice that I would give my younger self, is to not carry the world on your shoulders. There are people out there to help”.

Want to find out more?

Follow us on LinkedIn and Instagram

University of Winchester



Forces Employment Charity



We want to hear from you



Forces Employment Charity:

Email: kelly.wales@forcesemployment.org.uk

Website: www.forcesemployment.org.uk/news/em3-armed-forces-veterans-and-families-programme/

University of Winchester:

Email: WP@winchester.ac.uk, corianne.gjertsen@winchester.ac.uk, sarah.harder-collins@winchester.ac.uk

Website: www.winchester.ac.uk

www.winchester.ac.uk/positive-pathways

