

The SCiP Alliance Hub framework

SCiP Alliance Hubs bring people together to support practitioners and professionals to champion the progression of children and young people from Armed Forces families and ensure the best outcomes. We connect professionals in order to ensure the success of the Armed Forces Covenant, a “promise from the nation that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly”.

SCiP Alliance Hub network purpose

A SCiP Alliance Hub does together what can't be done alone. The SCiP Alliance network helps Hubs do things one Hub can't do alone. This is achieved by:

1. Building relationships to enable new and better collaborations to develop
2. Facilitating communication throughout the network
3. Building the capacity and capability of people in the Alliance's Hub network and developing a knowledge base, for example through the Thriving Lives toolkit.

Hub outcomes:

- To identify and share existing practice and remove duplication; to be a beacon for local practice
- To collaborate on developing and embedding new activity
- To influence the local culture to enable practitioners to effectively support Service children
- To investigate local needs and context, for example sourcing and analysing local data
- To inform and contribute to national and international research
- To ensure the learner's voice is heard

Each SCiP Alliance Hub will:

- Be the principal point of face-to-face engagement with the Alliance for stakeholders and connect people in a local area
- Collaborate to reduce duplication, develop new activity, improve efficiency and effectiveness
- Share and respond collectively to:
 - Effective practice
 - Challenges
 - Ideas
 - Priorities
 - Questions
- Report to and attend Practice Group and Hub Leads meetings
- Relay messages and information from central meetings to members after each meeting
- Support Hub members and actively grow engagement (e.g. bringing in outside speakers)
- Equip members to develop their own practice
- Be able to use the SCiP Alliance logo and branding

The national Hub Leads Group will:

- Review applications to form SCiP Alliance Hubs
- Support Hub Leads and organise opportunities to share experiences and ideas
- Invite each Hub Lead to report to and feedback from meetings

- Provide a mechanism for sharing questions, challenges and successes
- Produce a network evaluation document annually
- List Hub Lead Institutions on the Alliance website and provide an online presence for Hubs

The national Practice Group will:

- Include a 'messages for Hubs' item, enabling Hub Leads to easily report back to Hubs
- Lead Alliance activity in response to Hub's messages by the most appropriate means (e.g. conference inputs, website content, project development, informing Research Group priorities, and more)
- Coordinate activity across the network such as the national Creative Forces evaluation

SCiP Alliance Hub Operation

This is the framework which defines how Hubs operate and forms the basis of individual Hub Terms of Reference.

SCiP Alliance Mission

Champion the progression of the children of military personnel, so that they can make informed and confident transitions through further and higher education into thriving adult lives and careers.

Hub Purpose

Work collaboratively to support professionals to champion the progression of children and young people from Armed Forces families and ensure the best outcomes. Ensure the success of the Armed Forces Covenant, a "promise from the nation that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly".

Lead

The lead institution (s) will convene, guide and support the group's activities, developing relationships and networks and representing the group on the SCiP Alliance Practice Group.

Frequency of meetings

Meetings will be held as required with a minimum of two meetings per academic year.

Membership

Hubs shall set a quorate membership including representatives from stakeholders as locally appropriate such as :

- An HE institution
- An FE institution
- The school sector (e.g. local school networks or events for groups of schools)
- A local authority

Members shall faithfully and pro-actively: 1) reflect the perspectives of the group/s, contexts and beneficiaries they represent; 2) contribute to the group in ways that add value to the collective efforts of the Hub and the national network and 3) act as ambassadors for the Alliance

Hub Lead role description

The Lead institution in each Hub is the recognised lead championing work on the progression of Service children in the area and representative of the SCiP Alliance. They drive and facilitate collaborative working.

The Hub Lead institution will appoint a senior manager to oversee the Hub's development. The functional lead should have full authority to represent the institution and Hub and the time and travel budget to attend meetings of the national Practice Group. The lead will:

- Organise a minuted inaugural meeting with input from the central Alliance team
- Thereafter convene Hub meetings at least twice a year and organise logistics, such as a venue to meet and an agenda
- Be an initial point of engagement for stakeholders
- Build relationships and ensure appropriate representation
- Facilitate the development of collaborative projects
- Ensure Hub meetings address the following:
 - Practice
 - Challenges
 - Ideas
 - Priorities
 - Questions
- Ensure representation to feedback on the above at national Practice Group and Hub Leads meetings
- Produce a summary for national meetings and check for member updates to relay
- Report to the Hub on national developments from Practice Group meetings
- Ensure Hub engagement with national Practice Group initiatives as appropriate
- Share meeting minutes and attendance with the network of Hubs (via the SCiP Alliance team)
- Regularly review the Hub's operation to make sure it is working for all partners
- Collate data and respond to qualitative evaluation questions as required by the Hub Leads' annual evaluation

Hub pathway

This document draws on the experiences of Hub Leads and presents a pathway to support every Hub. The key steps involved in setting up every SCiP Alliance Hub are:

- Identify the Hub Lead organisation (up to two)
- Set a date for an inaugural meeting [see agenda in Appendix i]. This is an exploratory meeting to establish the need and will for a Hub in the area and resolve on an outline operating mechanism.
- Identify and invite key national and regional partners such as
 - Higher Education Institutions: Access and participation teams (contact the head of Widening Participation, or Recruitment) and the regional 'Uniconnect' partnerships
 - Colleges: start with the College Principal or student support
 - Local Authority: School Improvement, Children's Services, Armed Forces Covenant team or Armed Forces Champion
 - Schools: focus on identifying regional groups, perhaps through regional schools commissioners or academy trusts. Some areas do have regional networks of schools collaborating on support for Service children. If approaching individual schools, ensure you identify those with small numbers of Service children as well as the large schools near a base; school websites may identify a Service Pupil Premium lead (England only), Armed Forces Liaison Officer or lead governor.
 - Third sector: local Armed Forces charities or representatives of national organisations such as the RAF Families Federation, Army Families Federation, Naval Families Federation, Royal British Legion. Also consider any local groups working on progression and young people's careers such as LEPs (England only).
 - Local bases: Approach the unit welfare officer.
- Invite the SCiP Alliance to present the national picture. A member of the staff team or existing Hub lead will facilitate discussion if required. The SCiP Alliance team can provide literature to inform attendees and you can direct attendees to www.scipalliance.org to find out more.
- On the day, ensure you have someone minuting resolutions and actions.
- After the inaugural meeting, send lead organisation logos and blurb, along with information for the new Hub webpage to the SCiP Alliance Officer (georgina.abbott@winchester.ac.uk) for the Alliance website.
- Organise a second meeting to explore themes and create an action plan.
- Ensure meeting agendas address activities, priorities, questions and challenges around the educational progression of Service children and take meeting minutes which will feed into an action plan and into quarterly updates to the network.

- Arrange to collect the data required by the network monitoring evaluation process using the Alliance template:
 - Number of members
 - Organisations engaged by category of organisation e.g. HE, FE, school sector, LA, charity
 - Level of engagement: how many attend each meeting, how many are actively reporting activity
 - Hub-led Activity
 - Member activity linked to or because of Hub membership
 - Creative Forces or other targeted outreach events: number of interventions and numbers of young people
- Consider an early mapping exercise to identify existing local networks e.g. Armed Forces Covenant meetings

Appendix: Sample inaugural meeting agenda

SCiP Alliance Hub inaugural meeting

[Date and venue]

Agenda

Description (papers)	Intended outcomes	Lead
Welcome		Host organisation
Introductions	Understand each other's stake in the proposed Hub	Host organisation
The SCiP Alliance (1. SCiP Alliance Theory of Change)	Receive an outline of the context for Service children and the SCiP Alliance's rationale and approach	SCiP Alliance
The SCiP Alliance Hub network (2. Hub Framework)	Understand the Hub network's purpose and operating mechanisms, the role of a Hub and how it adds value.	SCiP Alliance
A West Midlands Hub	Reflect on the rationale for and role of this Hub Consider priorities	Proposed Hub Lead
Operating Practices	Develop operating mechanisms Consider which other stakeholders the Hub will need to ensure success Confirm lead organisation	Proposed Hub Lead
Plans and actions	Resolve on activities, deadlines and responsibilities	Proposed Hub Lead