



Service Children's Champion **Annual Review**



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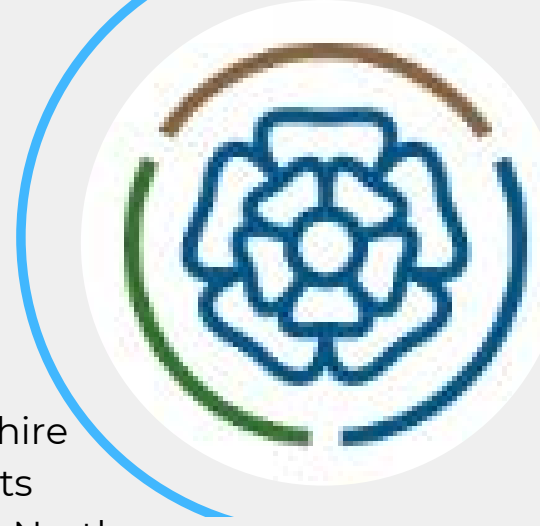
Spring

Summer



Armed Forces

Local Context



The Armed Forces have been rooted in North Yorkshire for more than 100 years and the county is proud of its military connections. Today, the military footprint in North Yorkshire includes Catterick Garrison, one of the largest military establishments in the UK, with sites at Ripon, Dishforth and Topcliffe; the Army Foundation College at Harrogate; and Royal Air Force has stations at Leeming, Fylingdales, Staxton Wold and Menwith Hill.

Currently, North Yorkshire has 10,770 armed services personnel, with the Army accounting for the large majority of these (84%). Almost three quarters of the total Army population in North Yorkshire (74%) is situated in Richmondshire and a further one in five (20.1%) are based in Harrogate. There are 1,690 Royal Air Force personnel in North Yorkshire, which accounts for 15.7% of the total armed forces population. Most RAF personnel (94.1%) are based in Hambleton and a small minority (5.9%) are in Ryedale.

In addition to the large number of serving armed forces personnel, the county has some of the largest concentrations of military veterans in the country. The latest Census data (ONS, 2021) shows North Yorkshire has 29,831 Armed Forces Veterans. Richmondshire has the highest proportion of Armed Forces Veterans in North Yorkshire at 9.5% (3,962) and third highest in England and Wales. The proportion of veterans in Richmondshire is more than double the national average figure, which is 3.8%. Harrogate has the highest number of Armed Forces Veterans in North Yorkshire with 7,076 (5.2%).

Added to this, there are **3,707 Service pupils attending schools in North Yorkshire**. Half of all Service children in North Yorkshire (50.1%) attend schools situated in Richmondshire. Approximately one in five Service pupils (21.3%) attend schools in Hambleton and almost one in five (18.6%) attend schools in Harrogate.

Service Children Autumn Term



Launch of Service Children's Network

The Service Children's Network was formerly known as the Service Families Strategy Group. Angela Campbell was appointed as Chair prior to being taking on her role as a new Service Children's Champion in January 2023.

Angela and Jess both felt that the group needed to be overhauled and quickly implemented a new format to the meetings.

The meetings are held termly and are split into two sections. The first part of the meeting is known as 'Initial Briefings' which involves local and national updates and is attended by headteachers, local authority members and military representatives. The second part of the meeting is for CPD and often features inspirational guest speakers. The aim is to work with school-based 'Service Children Advocates' in order to share good practice and provide a space where they can ask for advice and guidance.

The meetings used to be quite poorly attended but now we have 40-50 people attending each meeting and feedback has included:

Just a short note of thanks to yourself and Angela for the chance to talk about the forthcoming due regard duty for the Armed Forces Covenant and the council's plan to write a new covenant policy.

It was an excellent meeting, with a lot of good information being shared and very well attended, so thank you.

Anthony Ruddy,
Senior Strategy
and
Performance
Officer, NYCC



Fiona Howells,
Welfare Clerk, 1RMP
RHQ (Regiment
Military Police)

Thank you for allowing me to attend. Not only was this informative for the Regiment, but also for me as a parent to Service children within the county. The exact day I also received an email from my children's school with regards to an art workshop for the commemorative medals and crowns.

Headteachers have also stated that the meetings are now much more time-efficient and easy to access. Use of TEAMS has meant that more people have been able to attend.

We have also begun to expand the reach of our Service Children's Network and have included delegates from City of York and Oxfordshire Councils in our most recent meeting. The aim for the future of the Service Children's Network is to extend the invite to even more local authorities and seek further opportunities for increased collaboration.

Annual Service to Remember

Each year the Service Children's Champion team organise a 'Service to Remember' for military children. This is hosted at Ripon Cathedral and is attended by over 800 children and their teachers. It is also attended by representatives from North Yorkshire Council and the local military units.



The service features contributions from schools across the county and performances from the Service Children's Community Choir and other local schools.



Jess worked with children from Risedale School to create a video which was broadcast during the service. The students spoke eloquently about their understanding and knowledge of remembrance.



Scan this QR code to view the Risedale School Remembrance video produced in collaboration with BFBS

The theme of the Service was 'In Memory of Queen Elizabeth II' as she had recently passed away. As the head of the Armed Forces we felt that it was important that our Service children had an opportunity to celebrate her life and say goodbye. The altar was decorated by crowns and artwork which had been made by children from schools across the county. There were also some 3D crowns which had been created during an art workshop provided by Rural Arts based in Thirsk in collaboration with Never Such Innocence.



Scan this QR code to view some of the highlights from the Annual Service to Remember 2022

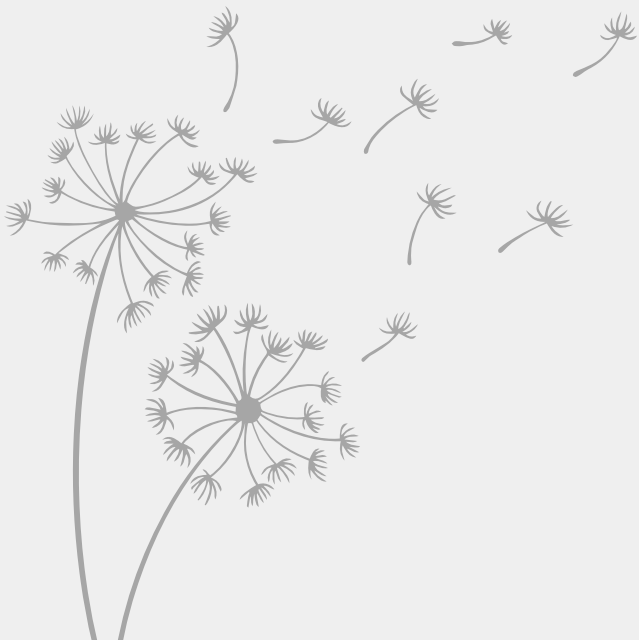


Helen Collin
Deputy Lord
Lieutenant for North
Yorkshire

What really struck me was the extraordinary pride that those very articulate young people have in their families. Pride that their parents/relations are serving, pride in previous generations some of whom have made the ultimate sacrifice.

A special mention to the fantastic Mr John Huck, Parade Marshall, who led the Royal British Legion Standard Bearer and our very own Service children, Alex Pryce from Bedale High and John Shanley from Richmond School who performed their duties as MKC Standard bearers brilliantly.

Mr Grahame Shepherd, MBE, who has more experience supporting Service children and families than anyone else we know, performed his role as Master of Ceremonies superbly. Mr Shepherd introduced VIPs, guests and schools and made us all feel welcomed and at ease. He likened the service to “a huge school assembly – and what a beautiful place to have a school assembly” mentioning how this “wonderful 10th service celebrates, commemorates, praises and gives joy to children” across all branches of the Armed Forces. Mr Shepherd also made sure to warn the children we were live streaming across the country, stating “who knows who may be watching – maybe HM the King himself!”



Service Children Spring Term



Service Children's Champion appointment

Due to a successful bid from Early Help, funding was acquired from the Lotteries Community Fund. which meant that a second Service Children's Champion could be appointed to work alongside Jess Greenhalgh who has been in post since 2019.

Angela Campbell was appointed in January 2023. The champions have worked in close collaboration to develop a new Local Offer for North Yorkshire schools, raising awareness and advocating on behalf of Service children and delivering high-quality support and CPD.



View one of our
'Friday Facts' videos
that we share on
social media

Social Media

In January 2023 the team re-established their social media accounts and began self-producing videos to share information, well-being tips, book recommendations and to highlight key events and celebrations.

We have had enquires from Service families based as far away as Liverpool and Germany as a result of viewing our social media posts.



Service Children's Champion
@servicechildrenschampion



Just wanted to say how much I am loving your videos on Facebook! They are so interactive and really show what you guys do behind the scenes.

Debbie Coyle
Children and Family
Support Worker

SCN Newsletter

Following on from the success of our first two Service Children's Network meetings in October and January we developed a brand-new monthly digital newsletter. The newsletter features information regarding upcoming events, local and national updates and other key information. The newsletter is sent directly to all members of the network with the aim that it is also shared with other school-based colleagues.

The newsletter has been well-received and it is an excellent way to keep Service children in the forefront of the minds of all those who work with them day to day across our county.

View our most recent newsletter here



Well-Being Workshops

We have visited and worked with smaller groups of children in Primary schools focusing on the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' but this year we also delivered some whole-class sessions for Year 6 children to help them to cope during SATs and upcoming transitions to secondary school. We self-produced presentations and work booklets to ensure that they were engaging and user-friendly.



Month of the Military Child - Photo Challenge

April is known as the 'Month of the Military Child' and we felt that North Yorkshire should lead the way in celebrating with our Armed Force's community. We established our first ever photo-challenge with the theme of 'Welcome to Our World'. We received over 100 entries and asked 5 special judges, including Stuart Carlton, to select their favourite photos for a special recognition award.

Local companies kindly donated family day out experiences for each of the winners so that the families could enjoy some quality time together.

We visited each of the winners at their school to present them with a trophy, a certificate, a bespoke chocolate lollipop and their tickets for a day out. We even took a trip to Cottingham Primary School in Hull to visit one of the winning families who had entered after viewing our social media posts about the photo challenge.

We used these opportunities to deliver whole-school assemblies about military children in order to further raise awareness of this unique community.



Just wanted to say Thank you so so much for our Flamingo Land Tickets!

Since our Dad left the Raf during covid, he didnt have chance to have a proper resettlement so things have been a bit tricky the last couple of years, he recently had a gap in employment which meant days out like this have been put on hold and wouldnt have been possible. Things are looking up now but this was the treat we all needed as a family.

People often forget the children of the recent service leavers struggle too, maybe even more so then whilst serving.



William, Georgina, Charlotte, Sophie, Emily Watson

Month of the Military Child Videos

In collaboration with BFBS we filmed a series of videos with Service children. This enabled the children to have an opportunity to speak about their experiences, their challenges and what they were most proud of.

These videos also helped us to further raise the profile of Service children.



Students at Richmond High School took part in filming...

BFBS video



Self-produced video

Service Children Summer Term



Foxglove Covert Photo Exhibition

Following on from the success of our photo challenge we were approached by Carl Watts from Foxglove Covert, Catterick Garrison. He offered us an opportunity to host an exhibition at the centre. They were keen to work with us as they wanted to increase the profile of the nature reserve in the local military community.



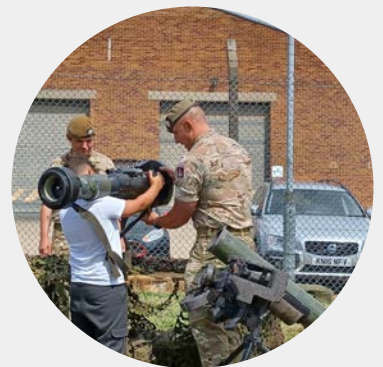
Representatives from the local community, council members and military representatives were invited to a special launch event, featuring a special poetry reading and performances from the Service Children's Community Choir. The event was a success and the children enjoyed a pond-dipping activity whilst the adults enjoyed viewing the photographs and quotes.

Armed Forces Day for Children

The Service Children's Champion team worked closely with Catterick Garrison Headquarters to organise this incredible event. Over 750 children attended from a range of local schools but also from as far away as York and Scarborough.

There were demonstrations from the Ghurka Regiment, food provided by the Royal Lancers and a flyover from a vintage Tiger Moth plane that had once been based in Catterick during World War Two.

The children were entertained by British Army Band Catterick and put through their paces in a warm-up session led by some Physical Training Instructors. They had the opportunity to participate in a range of activities and to sit in some of the military vehicles. It was a chance for the children to gain a greater insight into the world of their serving parents and also for their civilian friends to understand what it is like to be a Service child.



Scan this QR code to view some feedback from children who attended this year's event



Service Children Ongoing



Supporting Well-being

Jess and Angela have delivered 'Five Ways to Well-being' courses at a variety of Primary schools this year, as well as delivering whole class anxiety workshops and whole school bespoke assemblies on military life. They have also supported individual families who have experienced challenges due to military life. Angela Campbell is the founder of the Service Children's Community Choir which continues to grow, supporting children with their mental health. We have also worked with North Yorkshire Youth Voice to give children an opportunity to express themselves through poetry.

A 'Parents Emotional Well-being' course has been developed in collaboration with Children and Family Support Workers with a specific focus on military families. The aim is to roll this course out in the next academic year.

Career Professional Development

We have supported educational professionals through the delivery of high-quality CPD sessions on the impact of military life on pupils, Service Pupil Premium, family support, deployment and mobility.

Collaboration with Stakeholders

The Service Children's Champion team attend Civil Integration Partnership Board and MOD/LAP meetings. They liaise with SCiP Alliance, SCISS, AFF, NFF and RAFFF. They have also met and worked with representatives from Royal British Legion, Inspiring Choices, Reading Force and Little Troopers.



Citations

Highlighting North Yorkshire's SCC role...



Click the picture circle for the full guide

North Yorkshire County Council:

This local authority has gone to great lengths to improve the wellbeing of Service pupils in their schools. The Council's Children & Young People's Service takes a proactive role to reduce, as much as possible, the potential negative impact of a transient lifestyle and in closing any gaps in terms of educational achievement with their civilian peers. The Council recognises that Service pupils face unique challenges posed by frequent moves, changes in home, school and friends, long periods of separation from loved ones and that because of this at times some pupils require additional support. To deliver this, the Council employs two part-time Service Pupil Champions, both military spouses and parents, who work alongside schools and Local Authority colleagues to support Service children and their families.

Nickie Young, Service Pupil's Champion for North Yorkshire 2015-2021, was involved in the consultation process for this report.

The unique nature of this role led to Recommendation 28 of the report.

Click the picture circle for the full report



Recommendation 28

The Department for Education and the Devolved Governments to encourage all Local Authorities to appoint a Service Pupils' Champion.

If all local authorities in England were required to join the MOD Local Authority Partnership (MODLAP) this would ensure that a Service children's champion in every local authority could take responsibility for promoting smoother transitions between schools and accord a higher status to the needs of military children. We hope that they can be strongly encouraged to do so.

There is general agreement that an integrated model of welfare provision and support for families which brings together the military and organisations, schools and businesses in the local community is essential and by far the best way forward. This can increase the sense of belonging and reduce the isolation that families can feel, partly because military friendships are so transient and difficult to maintain when families move from one area to another, and partly because families often feel disconnected from the local community and peer support may be lacking.



[*Click the logo for the full case study*](#)



The Trust has supported a large number of service children in North Yorkshire County Council schools. Among a number of practitioners who undertook the Trust funded 'Emotional First Aid' (EFA) 'train the trainer course', with the aim of cascading the learning across the county, were two Service Pupil Champions.

Recognising their key role in supporting the children of military families, who often experience issues with parents being away from home and frequent changing of schools, the Trust awarded a grant to continue the employment of North Yorkshire County Council's two Service Pupils' Champions when Education Support Funding stopped. The Champions raised awareness of Service pupils' needs through staff CPD as well as providing a link between military and school partners and providing early intervention & signposting to other services.

The Champion's EFA training has led to delivering Anxiety Workshops for service children and parents, the benefits of which have been huge, and the long-term impact is already being seen.

"The session was effective in offering our most vulnerable children support in managing their emotions and fears. It was notable how deep-seated and serious many concerns raised were. We need to be acutely aware as a staff of the sorts of profound concerns our children may be carrying."

– Head, RAF Leeming Primary School

[*Click the logo for the full article*](#)

The logo for 'Army & You' features the words 'Army & You' in a green, serif font, with the ampersand in a black, stylized font.



Service kids' champion

CONGRATULATIONS to North Yorkshire County Council's Children and Young People Service, which has won a coveted award for its work supporting Service kids.

The role of the *Service Pupils' Champions*, created to support families from Armed Forces communities, won the *Improving the Customer Experience* category at the County Council Innovations Awards.

Created in 2012, the job has since expanded to cover the whole county and has evolved to include coordinating projects for Service pupils, their schools and families.

With a large number of Service children based in the county, there are now two Service Pupils' Champions – Nickie Young and Annabel Hall – who are both from Army families themselves. They help to promote emotional wellbeing and social development of children and young people aged 5-18, especially during periods of active deployment and exercise and at times of transition.

Click the logo for the full report



Listening to Learn:
The Voices of Service
Children report

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL:

DANDELION BLOG

WHAT CHANGE WERE YOU TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

We wanted to give the Service children in North Yorkshire an outlet to speak about their experiences as being a part of the military and share this with numerous people in education and the military around North Yorkshire. We already manage a monthly blog giving out any relevant information surrounding North Yorkshire's Service children – anything that might help support them or showcasing any events that they have been involved in – and we thought it would be a fantastic next step to what we already do, to hear from Service children directly.

HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT SEEKING YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS IN THE PROCESS?

We already have fantastic links with so many schools with Service children on their roll in North Yorkshire, and we have contacted the schools directly to ask them to email us with the children's views on recent events that have been important to them – such as the Ripon Cathedral Service for Remembrance that took part in November and had over 700 Service Pupils in North Yorkshire in attendance.

WHAT SORTS OF THINGS DID THEY SAY?

The Service children spoke about how special they felt being a part of such a huge event, and how important it is for them in particular to remember the men and women who gave their lives in defending our country all those years ago, when they have parents who are doing such a brilliant and vital job currently serving our country. They talked about how proud they are of the community they are part of.

HOW DID THEIR VIEWS INFORM YOUR WORK?

The role of Service Pupils' Champion has been ongoing for 8 years now, having been created by North Yorkshire County Council in order to provide extra support for Service children in the county. We are so passionate about giving the Service children a voice. We know how special these children are and the challenges that they face being a part of the military, and we endeavour year on year to spread awareness of these unique and amazing children in North Yorkshire. Hearing their views has solidified the fact that the Service children have so much to say, and this Dandelion blog is a fantastic way for them to be heard.

WHAT IMPACT(S) DID YOU ACHIEVE AS A RESULT?

The first Service children's blog went live on our website, www.servicepupilschampion.co.uk, in March 2020. We are expecting the impact to be that the Service children will have a fantastic outlet to share their own personal experiences. The feedback we have had so far from the pupils, teachers, head teachers and military personnel has been super positive – all are very much looking forward to reading the children's perspective.

5.2 Key Messages for Local Authorities / Multi-Academy Trusts

We Value Your Support

Schools who felt they received support from their Local Authority or Multi-Academy Trust valued this highly. This included having staff dedicated to Service children who could be contacted for advice or provided useful resources, and other practical support to address key needs:

"The setting up of the military youth forum has raised the profile of Service pupils within our school."

"Our local authority have invested heavily in the school to the tune of about £3,000,000 as we have expanded... We have had lots of building works with a new hall planned for next term! Their support has been much appreciated."

"My Multi Academy Trust [...] offers support by trying to support with financial bids and utilising expertise across our schools."

"[Local Authority] Service Pupils Champions: You are amazing, keep up the great work!"

The most commonly given message (17%) was that local networking was highly valued as it enables schools to share ideas, resources and best practice examples. Schools looked to local authorities to facilitate networking between schools and the Armed Forces, Service Pupil Champions, local schools, agencies, and charities; and looked to MATs to allow time to be allocated to these activities.

Networking across county boundaries was also suggested, along with signposting schools to local and national sources of support:

"Schools need to work together to share support - especially when there are only a few Service children in a school."

"More county wide events for Forces children, and ensuring that staff are afforded to the time to support."

"Would be nice to have some community link up days for the Service children to meet across schools."

"Develop outreach services and collaboration of various schools who have Service children."

Click the logo for the full report



Service Children in
State Schools - "Voice
of Schools" report
2021

Further evidence

To support the SCC role...

- ["Kin and Country" - Growing up as an Armed Forces Child - Children's Commissioner report 2018](#)
- [North Yorkshire Council's Armed Forces Covenant Policy 2023](#)
- [Family Continuous Attitude Survey \(FAMCAS\) 2022](#)
- [Naval Children's Charity - Impact of Military Life on the Service Child 2021](#)
- [RAF Benevolent Fund research reports - "Growing up in the RAF" and "Meeting the Needs of the RAF Family"](#)
- [SCISS - "The Voice of Schools" report 2021](#)
- [Royal British Legion - Supporting Service Children in England](#)
- [SCiP Alliance - Listening to Learn: The Voices of Service children](#)
- [Living in Our Shoes - Andrew Selous MP 2020 report](#)

