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Dear colleagues

I hope the start of the new academic year has been a good one. I am writing to provide you with some updates and key dates for the year ahead.

### **Welcome to our new Service Pupils' Champion (SPC)**

I am sure you will be aware that Annabel Hall left her SPC post at the end of the summer. She will continue to do some part-time work for the SENDIASS service, with a focus on Armed Forces families. Additionally, she has started a new post as a fostering social worker for the Council. We wish her well.

We now welcome Jess Greenhalgh as her replacement who has just moved up to North Yorkshire from Brize Norton, Oxfordshire. A qualified primary teacher, Jess now lives at Linton and is married to a member of Flight Ops for the RAF; she is therefore **very** conversant with the opportunities and challenges presented by a mobile, military lifestyle. She is looking forward to working alongside Nickie Young (now in her seventh year in post and with her school focus continuing to be Catterick main camp) and supporting schools and families. Both SPCs are members of the Early Help Service, liaising closely with Education & Skills and the military welfare services. Please use them to support your Service-related projects and any military families needing some early intervention. Both are also happy to help set up (but not run!) Military Kids' Club (MKC) Heroes' groups in your schools. If you have never seen it, do take a look at their website <http://www.servicepupilschampion.co.uk/> and check out their monthly blogs.

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### **Next Service Families Strategy Group Meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct, 9.30 – 12.30 pm Boroughbridge High School**

Papers for this meeting will soon to be emailed out – please protect the date. If you are not on the circulation list, or haven't considered attending in the past, please do. This established network of school leaders, welfare staff, military reps and LA officers, meets termly with the following aims:

- *Support the work of the County Councils in this area, ensuring that the community covenant is promoted & upheld*
- *Develop and promote best practice in the education and welfare of Service pupils*
- *Support Service families at times of transition and operational exercise and deployment*
- *Exchange information between schools, the military, SCISS / SCiP Alliance, welfare organisations and wider services*

At the October meeting there will be a training slot on Young Carers in military communities and a briefing from Connie MacFarlane from the Educational Psychology Service on her recent thesis *Supporting Resilience Processes for Children from Armed Forces Families*. Please confirm attendance with Nickie. The group needs a new Chair – please let me know if you or a colleague would be willing for one year.

### **Annual Remembrance Service, Ripon Cathedral – Fri 8<sup>th</sup> Nov 1pm (Commemorating D Day 75)**

Plans are well underway for this year's gathering 700+ Service children and school staff with an associated art project. There are few spaces left, but please contact Nickie Young in the first instance for queries.

### **MOD Education Support Fund (ESF) 2020**

Aimed at supporting schools with **exceptional mobility** and / or **deployment**, bids are invited from schools / groups of schools and LAs for the £2M 'pot' from across the United Kingdom. SCISS Executive members will again score all English bids and will make recommendations to a national funding panel. Full details can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mod-support-fund-for-schools-with-service-children-grant-application-pack>

Deadline – midday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019. I am happy to advise on / review bids.

### **Festival of Friends project - funded by the Armed Forces Community Covenant Fund**

I am pleased to report that I have been successful in being awarded a community covenant small fund grant to finance this innovative and exciting project. Working alongside the City of York Council, York University and the University of York St. John, this year-long project is aimed at improving the support schools provide their Service children through CPD and sharing of / developing good practice. It is particularly (but not exclusively) aimed at schools with small numbers of Service children on their rolls.

The project will include an awards scheme (optional for schools to participate in) and the publication of successful case studies. It will culminate in a large, and FREE, campus tour and awards ceremony at one of the universities, aimed at participating schools' staff, pupils and their parents. This is provisionally earmarked for the afternoon and early evening of **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The accompanying letter provides more details and an agreement form for participating schools.**

If you are interested, but have not signed up, please email me asap in the first instance and then get the agreement form to me by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September. Participating schools will need to identify a staff member to be their *Armed Forces Champion* (who will need to attend up to four short training / network meetings across the year and then disseminate key information to their school colleagues) and run a small school improvement project. These projects can then be submitted to try and win £500 cash prizes (optional).

### **VE day - 75 years commemoration**

This significant event falls on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 (the 'new' bank holiday) and Cllr Jim Clark, Chairman of the County Council, is keen to plan a large scale event that includes Service pupils being involved in recording oral histories from veterans from that time. Nickie, Jess and I met with him last week to start the planning. We are considering holding two large 1940s street parties involving schools on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May** – one on the Garrison and the other in the Ripon area. Others might be possible...watch this space!

### **Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance**

Many of you will be aware that I as well as being a member of the SCiP Alliance National Practice Group, I am also providing consultancy support on an exciting funded project. This is creating a school self-evaluation framework of evidence-based effective practice to support the education and welfare of Service children, as well as developing an associated suite of online CPD modules. Whilst this will not be launched until the start of 2020, I intend to roll-out the tool and some of the professional development materials through the *Festival of Friends* project – even more reason to get involved in that! The Alliance's website is becoming a really useful source of information and resources: <https://www.scipalliance.org/>

Have a good term.

