

Seven things parents should know about Service Pupil Premium



Our Armed Forces Covenant Managers have produced the top seven things parents should know about SPP... and especially now.

Parents have until **18th January 2018** to ensure their school has been notified of their child(ren)'s status in order to be eligible for Service Pupil Premium.



1. Service Pupil Premium (SPP) was introduced in England under the Armed Forces Covenant in recognition of the impact of service life on children

SPP was introduced in April 2011 - one of the key commitments of the Government to reducing disadvantage for armed forces families by providing an extra £22.5 million to schools in England. Schools receive £300 per service child to provide additional support in recognition of the impact of mobility and deployment on their lives. Currently SPP is not available to schools in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

2. Schools will only receive SPP for children registered as service pupils on 18th January 2018

The amount of SPP paid to schools each September is calculated from the number of children registered as service pupils in the Spring School Census which is held on the third Thursday in January every year. On School Census Day schools are legally required to provide a detailed range of information to the Department for Education about their pupils including attendance, educational progress and attainment, special educational needs, eligibility for free school meals and exclusions.

3. Schools can only record children as service pupils if the parents identify them as such

As the School Census is a statutory

obligation parents cannot object under the Data Protection Act to the information being shared with the Department for Education apart from a number of excepted categories, one of which is whether children are service pupils. The other excepted categories are ethnicity, language, country of birth and nationality. As a result parents must notify schools if they wish to identify their child as a service child to enable the school to claim SPP.

4. Schools may not receive SPP until nearly 18 months after the child has started at the school

One of the challenges for schools is that SPP funding is determined only by the previous January School Census information. As a result a service child who joins school in February will not be noted on the School Census until nearly a year later and the school will not receive any SPP until the following September nearly 18 months later. For schools with large numbers of service children this may have little impact on the overall sum they receive. However, for schools with small numbers of service pupils or schools with large fluctuations in overall numbers this can create a significant loss or delay in SPP funding and potentially limit the immediate additional support they can provide.

5. Schools can continue to receive SPP for children whose parents have left the armed forces for up to five years

Under the 'Ever 6' provisions any child who has been registered as a service child in the annual census since 2012 is still eligible to be registered for SPP funding even if their parents have since left the armed forces. Therefore it is important that parents who have left the armed forces within the last five years notify their children's school that they are eligible to be registered as service children especially if the child has since moved schools.

6. When a child moves school they will not automatically continue to be flagged as a service child

Service children are more likely to move schools than their peers but new schools will not necessarily have the information passed on by the old school that the child is a service pupil. Recent changes to the Common Transfer File for schools now enable this information to be included when a pupil moves as long as the old school flags the correct box. To be sure parents should notify the new school that their child is a service child to enable the school to receive SPP.

7. SPP is only one type of pupil premium

There is more than one type of pupil premium:

- **Free School Meals Pupil Premium** - is funding for disadvantaged pupils who come from poorer family backgrounds
- **Looked After Pupil Premium** - is paid to schools for pupils who are or have been in the care of the Local Authority.

Evidence has shown that both groups of children are more likely to leave school with lower levels of attainment than other children. These pupil premiums help schools improve educational outcomes for these children.

By contrast SPP is for schools to provide mainly pastoral support during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact on service children of family mobility or parental deployment. Schools must publish information about how they spend pupil premium funding and should not combine all types of pupil premium together. As part of their inspection, Ofsted will hold head teachers and governors to account for their rationale for how pupil premium funding has been spent and how its impact has been assessed.

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More information:

[Government guidance about Service Pupil Premium](#) (note: 2017 dates are shown on this link so ignore the 19th Jan deadline!)

[Guidance to schools about what they must publish about Pupil Premium funding](#)

[Ofsted guidance about inspections](#)

[Schools Guidance about the School Census](#)

[DCYP booklet - Service Pupil Premium 'Examples of Best Practice'](#)

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