



Service Premium Report 2026-2027

What is Service Pupil Premium Funding?

State schools, academies and free schools in England, which have children of service families in school years Reception to Year 11, can receive the SPP funding. It is designed to assist the school in providing the additional support that these children may need and is currently worth £350 per service child who meets the eligibility criteria.

Why was it introduced?

The Department for Education introduced the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in April 2011 in recognition of the specific challenges children from service families face and as part of the commitment to delivering the armed forces covenant.

How does Service Pupil Premium differ from Pupil Premium Funding?

The SPP is there for schools to provide mainly pastoral support for service children, during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact on service children of family mobility or parental deployment. Pupil Premium was introduced to raise attainment and accelerate progress within disadvantaged groups. Service Pupil Premium is not combined with the main Pupil Premium funding and the spending of each premium is accounted for separately.

Eligibility criteria for Service Pupil Premium:

Pupils attract SPP if they meet one of the following criteria:

- one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full time reserve)
- they have been registered as a 'service child' on the January school census at any point since 2015, see footnote
- one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme

Children should be identified as service children ahead of the January school census deadline. Service parents need to make the school aware of their status by talking to the head teacher or school admin staff.

How is the Service Pupil Premium funding used?

In order to support the pastoral needs of service children, The Cambridge Primary has flexibility over how the SPP is used. The DfE consider us best placed to understand and respond to the specific needs of those pupils for whom the funding has been allocated. The funding is spent on providing a variety of emotional and social support.

At The Cambridge Primary School, the allocation of funding supplements the main school funding and is mainly used to supplement the cost of ELSA provision (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and nurture groups.

In addition, the allocation of funding supplements the main school funding to provide additional staff hours, if required, to support the needs of service children when they join a new school or when a parent is posted or deployed.

SPP is not used to subsidise routine school activity (trips, music lessons etc.), however, it may be used to organise activities or events just for service children, to help them enjoy their time at school and build a sense of a wider community and understanding of the role their service parent plays (e.g. with military specific trips) to help them cope with the potential strains of service life.

School Overview

	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
Number on roll*	420	420	420
Number of children eligible for SPP funding*	46 (11%)	60 (14.9%)	66 (16%)
Amount of funding	£16,100	£21,000	£23,100

**at time of October census*

Barriers to learning for eligible pupils include:

1. Emotional impact and instability when parent/parents are on deployment. Deployment is when a serving personnel is serving away from home for a period of time, this might be either a 6 to 9 month tour of duty, a training course or an exercise which could last for a few weeks. is serving away from home for a period of time, this might be either a 6 to 9 month tour of duty, a training course or an exercise which could last for a few weeks.
2. Some pupils eligible for Service Pupil Premium do not make expected progress in writing.
3. Attendance for children eligible for Service Pupil Premium funding can be an area of concern for some individuals, which can affect attainment and emotional well-being.
4. Some children eligible for service premium funding require further support to develop their emotional and social skills so that they are ready to learn in the classroom environment.

Service Premium provision may include:

- Providing small group robust and immediate intervention with experienced teachers and Learning Support Assistants for children who have had turbulence within their education and have gaps in key concepts or skills
- Extra-curricular activities intended to promote confidence, well-being, success and activities during deployment
- Pastoral support from an ELSA or nurture group, particularly when there is turbulence, such as deployment within the family
- Educational opportunities and life experiences which will enrich the pupils' experience of school and learning (e.g. school trips and visits from professional and groups)
- Support and advice for families to ensure all Service Pupil Premium children achieve and attend school regularly

Impact from 2025-2026

Enhanced pastoral support through dedicated ELSA provision

The recruitment of a full-time ELSA has significantly strengthened our capacity to support service pupils' emotional wellbeing and pastoral needs. This dedicated role has enabled us to:

- Provide structured ELSA interventions to a greater number of pupils throughout the year
- Support smooth transitions for new service pupils joining the school mid-year
- Offer informal support and guidance to parents navigating school systems
- Deliver responsive, ad-hoc support for pupils experiencing temporary difficulties, ensuring timely intervention before issues escalate

This expansion of ELSA provision has freed our Family Support Advisor to focus more strategically on supporting families and addressing life outside school, creating a more comprehensive support network for service families.

Deployment support

A small number of families experienced deployment during 2025-2026. Our ELSA provided targeted emotional support to affected pupils as needed, helping them to manage the challenges of parental absence and maintain their engagement with learning.

Miniature Heroes club

The Miniature Heroes club continued to be a highly valued provision throughout 2025-2026, with approximately 20 service pupils attending each term. This club provided service children with a safe space to connect with peers who share similar experiences and benefit from positive military role models, fostering resilience and a sense of

belonging. While the club had to end during the year due to circumstances beyond our control, it will resume in the current academic year (2026-2027).

Academic outcomes

Service pupils' attainment in 2025-2026 remained very slightly below the whole school average but matched national averages for service pupils, demonstrating that our targeted support is effectively mitigating wider gaps and promoting steady progress year-on-year.

Service pupils benefited from our whole-school focus on reading and writing interventions, particularly through Little Wandle interventions. These phonics-based interventions improved pupils' reading fluency and accuracy, enabling them to better access the wider curriculum and boosting their self-esteem and confidence as learners.