



Funding for Armed Forces Children and Young People

An overview and analysis

Chester Howarth and Rhiannon Doherty



Funded by



In association with



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Foreword



Significant research over more than a decade has highlighted both the issues faced by the UK's Armed Forces personnel and their families and the support available to them through the charity sector and beyond.

In 2009, the Naval Children's Charity commissioned *The Overlooked Casualties of Conflict*, a pioneering investigation dedicated to Armed Forces children and young people as a distinct cohort and identifying ten key challenges they face. A follow-up study, *The Impact of Service Life on the Military Child: The Overlooked Casualties of Conflict - Update and*

Review Report, commissioned in 2021, allowed us to take stock of over a decade of change characterised by both significant progress and persisting challenges. The immediate years following our 2009 report saw the creation of the Armed Forces Covenant and the introduction of the Service Pupil Premium in England, both in 2011. The Forces in Mind Trust was established in the same year and, more than a decade on, we have seen huge growth in the scale of research and evidence-based support in the sector.

Andrew Selous MP's landmark report *Living in Our Shoes*, and the Armed Forces Act 2021 and Armed Forces Families Strategy that sprung from it, recognise that growth in research and evidence, and signal the sustained commitment of the Armed Forces community to respond. They also highlight calls to action for those of us providing funding to both families and the organisations supporting them.

The world has changed considerably since 2009. For Armed Forces children and young people, that time has seen new challenges added to old ones and a more complex sea of needs, as well as opportunities. In all this time, there has been no work to focus explicitly on understanding the role of funders supporting the children of serving and former Armed Forces personnel - until now.

This report by the Directory of Social Change (DSC) fills the gap in research, providing for the first time a systematic picture of the funding landscape of support and invaluable insights into the challenges and opportunities for funders to enhance the impact of their investments in Armed Forces children and young people's futures.

The report identifies the Naval Children's Charity as one of very few charities dedicated solely to the needs of the children of Armed Forces families. With like-minded partners, the Naval Children's Charity has led work identifying and responding to those needs. Chairing the Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance Funders' Forum and leading this research with DSC - a central pillar of the forum's activity - is a natural fit for our ambitions to enable stronger collaboration between funders. It is also a way to enhance our understanding of Armed Forces children and young people's needs so that - together - we can help them make the most of their unique talents and experiences.

Working together, we can deliver on the recommendations of this report and improve the outcomes and lives of Armed Forces children and young people. We remain deeply grateful to the Armed Forces personnel for their service to our nation; it is our privilege and duty to serve their children so that their lives are not disadvantaged as a result.

We are hugely grateful to Forces in Mind Trust for funding this important work and to DSC for its robust research and the practical recommendations for improving the quality and impact of our collective efforts. On behalf of the Naval Children's Charity and the SCiP Alliance Funders' Forum, I invite all who care about Armed Forces children and young people to work with us to help them thrive.

Clare Scherer, Chief Executive, Naval Children's Charity and Chair, Service Children's Progression Alliance Funders' Forum

About the Directory of Social Change

At the Directory of Social Change (DSC), we believe that the world is made better by people coming together to serve their communities and each other. For us, an independent voluntary sector is at the heart of that social change, and we exist to support charities, voluntary organisations and community groups in the work they do. Our role is to:

- **provide practical information** on a range of topics, from fundraising to project management, in both our printed publications and our e-books;
- **offer training** through public courses, events and in-house services;
- **research funders** and maintain a subscription database, Funds Online, with details on funding from grant-making charities, companies and government sources;
- **offer bespoke research** to voluntary sector organisations in order to evaluate projects, identify new opportunities and help make sense of existing data;
- **stimulate debate and campaign** on key issues that affect the voluntary sector, particularly to champion the concerns of smaller charities.

DSC's award-winning research on Armed Forces charities continues to be generously funded by Forces in Mind Trust. Each report is freely available to download, and printed copies of DSC's *Sector Insight* and *Focus On* reports are available upon request. For the latest analysis on Armed Forces charities, visit DSC's online interactive database or contact our research team via research@dsc.org.uk.

DSC's researchers are experts in undertaking charity sector research to inform policy and practice. Our bespoke and commissioned research is led by the needs of our clients, and our policy work supports the wider voluntary sector. To find out more about DSC's research services, visit us online at www.dsc.org.uk/research or get in touch with us via research@dsc.org.uk to see how DSC's research can help you and your organisation.

About the authors

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Chester joined DSC in 2020 and works as a Senior Researcher, primarily on DSC's Armed Forces charities research. He was the lead author on two publications in DSC's *Focus On* series - which analysed Armed Forces charities' provision of support to families and financial support - and contributes to ongoing research on the impacts of socio-economic changes on charities.

Chester has also led the development of DSC's online interactive resources, which provide a new way of disseminating the latest data on Armed Forces charities.

Prior to joining DSC, Chester worked as a Research Assistant, supporting projects on child poverty and wellbeing and co-authoring articles for academic journals. He also has experience working as a freelance consultant to a group of children's charities and undertaking research with a statutory health organisation.

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Rhiannon holds a BA (Hons) in English Literature and Communications. She also holds an MA in Politics and Mass Media from the University of Liverpool. She enjoys helping charities use their data to gain new insights and better serve their beneficiaries.

Acknowledgements

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Executive summary

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

This report aims to provide a systematic and rigorous account of the landscape of funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people. In the context of this report, the phrase 'Armed Forces children and young people' refers to 'a person whose parent, or carer, serves in the regular Armed Forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life' (SCiP Alliance, 2022a).

Through identifying, for the first time, the funders that provide support for Armed Forces children and young people – and presenting insights about the value and nature of their funding – this research intends to contribute to the knowledge of both funders and funding recipients. Specifically, this research aims to address the following questions:

- How many funders are there?
- How much funding is provided?
- Who can be funded?
- What can be funded?
- What is the role of monitoring and evaluation?
- What is the role of collaboration?

It is hoped that funders, organisations and professionals that support Armed Forces children and young people will use this report to increase their knowledge of the funding landscape. It is also anticipated that the conclusions and recommendations will help inform policies and strategies, and will extend opportunities for conversation and collaboration in directing funding to Armed Forces children and young people.

METHODOLOGY

Identifying funders of Armed Forces children and young people

The Directory of Social Change (DSC)'s researchers adopted a multifaceted approach to identifying the organisations that fund support for Armed Forces children and young people. This included:

- desk research to investigate the grant-making organisations in DSC's databases, including systematic analysis of publicly available information (websites, annual reports and accounts);
- direct enquiry with organisations to establish evidence of relevant support to beneficiaries;

- the identification and analysis of specialist organisations that have a core focus on Armed Forces children and young people;
- interviews with funders – including charities and statutory bodies – to identify funders and funding streams that support Armed Forces children and young people.

Gaining insights from funders

DSC's researchers adopted a mixed-methods approach to gain insights on the scope and nature of the funding for Armed Forces children and young people. This involved:

- **semi-structured interviews** (N=10, representing 14.5% of the identified funders) with charities and statutory bodies to explore themes such as access to funding, barriers and enablers to funding, and engagement in collaboration (interviews were analysed thematically, and illustrative quotes appear throughout the report for added context);
- a **survey of funders** (N=39, representing 56.5% of the identified funders) to provide qualitative and quantitative data around how funding is provided, which groups of Armed Forces children and young people are eligible for support, what funding is spent on, and the roles of evaluation and collaboration.
- several **case studies** including both funders and recipients of funding (schools and local authorities), which were produced using information gained via direct communication with representatives from these organisations alongside publicly available information.

KEY FINDINGS ABOUT FUNDING FOR ARMED FORCES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

How many funders are there?

- DSC identified 69 organisations that provided funding specifically intended to support Armed Forces children and young people in the UK.
- Only 10.1% (N=7) of these funders were defined as specialist child-focused funders (that is, organisations that have a central focus on supporting Armed Forces children and young people).
- Among the identified funders, 44 were Armed Forces charities, which represent just 2.5% of all Armed Forces charities and just 5.2% of all grant-making Armed Forces charities.
- In addition to the 69 funders, DSC identified two statutory funding streams focused on Armed Forces children and young people. They are discussed through case studies in section 2.5.
- The number of funders may be higher than identified in this report. For example, an additional 49 organisations showed evidence of funding at the level of the family – not specifically the child or young person – but did not engage with DSC's attempts at direct contact.

How much funding is provided?

- In a typical financial year, the survey respondents provided approximately £3.1 million in funding to around 8,600 individuals and approximately £5.5 million in funding for around 600 organisations.
- These are low estimates for the landscape of funders overall: not all funders completed the survey, and a significant proportion of the respondents were unable to provide a figure because they did not collect or publish data on the value of their funding for Armed Forces children and young people (see section 3.2).
- In the most recent financial year, there was at least £28 million in funding for Armed Forces children and young people through the two statutory funding streams focused on Armed Forces children and young people.

Who can be funded?

- Among the funders identified (N=69), around half (49.2%) only funded organisations, under one-third (30.4%) only funded individuals and the remaining 20.3% provided funding to both.
- Among the survey respondents, eligibility criteria were generally quite broad. Most could support children and young people from both Service and ex-Service families, and were able to provide funding throughout the UK. The typical age range at which funders could offer support generally fell between birth and 18 or 25 years of age.
- Aside from Armed Forces charities (three-fifths of which were affiliated with a specific Service branch), almost all of the remaining funders could provide tri-Service support (i.e. to children and young people from any Service branch).
- Some interviewees described a flexible approach to their eligibility criteria, which enabled them to respond to the needs of children or young people who otherwise might fall outside a strictly defined age range, for example.

What can be funded?

- The respondents typically had a broad remit of support for Armed Forces children and young people that included educational support, wellbeing and social support, and mental health support: 37.5% provided all three types of support through funding for organisations and 45.5% provided all three types of support through funding to individuals.
- Funders had different requirements on how their funding for organisations could be spent. More than one-third (37.5%) of the respondents did not provide funding that covered core costs (costs other than project delivery). This finding is particularly important, as recent research shows Armed Forces charities are experiencing and responding to higher core costs in the current economic environment (Howarth and Cole, 2023).

- More than half of the survey respondents either mostly (28.6%) or only (28.6%) provided single-year funding. As highlighted among the interviews and case studies, this can have implications for the longer-term sustainability of a project, staff retention and future planning.

What is the role of monitoring and evaluation?

- Only a handful (N=5) of the non-specialist funders (N=62) published information on the total number of organisations they funded to specifically support Armed Forces children and young people and/or the value of this funding – and none published data on the number of Armed Forces children and young people they funded and/or the value of this funding.
- DSC's survey suggests that one reason for low external reporting on these key metrics is a lack of internal data collection. This may make it difficult for funders to use data to inform their decision-making and evidence the impact of funding.
- Over one-third (35.7%) of the respondents did not require the organisations they funded to provide an evaluation of the outcomes.
- Respondents and interviewees highlighted various barriers to evaluation, including limited capacity, low participation from the organisations funded and a lack of knowledge of evaluation techniques. Overcoming these barriers could help provide more concrete evidence and understanding of what works when funding Armed Forces children and young people.

What is the role of collaboration?

- Around three-fifths (61.5%) of the survey respondents collaborated with one or more other organisation to provide funding for Armed Forces children and young people. Survey respondents most commonly partnered with Armed Forces charities, followed by other registered charities.
- The survey respondents overwhelmingly either strongly agreed (65.5%) or agreed (24.1%) that collaboration enabled their organisation to achieve things that it would not achieve alone.
- Interviewees mentioned various benefits of collaboration, including using resources more efficiently and limiting duplication, sharing skills and expertise, and making access to support easier for beneficiaries.
- There remains considerable scope to grow funders' awareness of potential collaborators and foster future collaboration – just over two-fifths (43.4%) had a moderate or lower awareness of potential collaborators. Based on most funders' own positive perceptions, making collaboration easier could help organisations achieve more with their money.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DSC makes the following recommendations for umbrella organisations, forums and networks, such as the SCiP Alliance:

- **Recommendation 1:** Encourage and support funders to collect more specific data on their funding practices and share information using a centralised resource to overcome current limitations on the availability of information and inform policy, strategy and campaigns.
- **Recommendation 2:** Capitalise on positive perceptions of collaboration by advancing the related infrastructure so that funders of Armed Forces children and young people can work together more efficiently and effectively.
- **Recommendation 3:** Encourage funders to set aside funding for evaluation and generate resources to help funding recipients evaluate the success of their projects or programmes.
- **Recommendation 4:** Continue to collect and share data on how the continually evolving socio-economic environment is affecting funders, as well as the individuals and organisations they fund.
- **Recommendation 5:** Fund and undertake further research that can draw on the experiences of Armed Forces children and young people – and their families – as recipients or potential beneficiaries of funding to deepen knowledge and inform funding strategies.

Introduction

ABOUT THE REPORT

This report aims to provide the first systematic and rigorous account of the landscape of funding supporting Armed Forces children and young people. The phrase 'Armed Forces children and young people' refers to 'a person whose parent, or carer, serves in the regular Armed Forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life' (SCiP Alliance, 2022a).

This report focuses on funding from charities but encompasses funding from other types of organisation (such as businesses or social enterprises) and statutory funding streams. It includes both funding to individuals (i.e. funding given directly to Armed Forces children and young people or to a parent or guardian on their behalf) and funding for other organisations (i.e. money given to an organisation to support Armed Forces children and young people through its services or programmes).

Chapter 1 describes the context of funding for Armed Forces children and young people. It provides some background on the demographic characteristics of Armed Forces children and young people before turning in more detail to the aspects of life in the Armed Forces community that can be unique to their experiences growing up.

Chapter 2 focuses on the question 'How many funders are there?'. It aims to provide a robust guide to the number of funders that provide support for Armed Forces children and young people in the UK, the different types of funder and some of the challenges in identifying these funders.

Chapter 3 focuses on the question 'How much funding is provided?'. This chapter aims to provide insights about the scope of funding – both directly to individuals and indirectly through other organisations – as well as where funders' income comes from and the extent to which this is sufficient for their activities.

Chapter 4 turns to the question 'Who can be funded?'. This chapter focuses on providing an overview of who can receive funding, including the distinction between organisations and individuals as recipients, the types of organisation that can be funded and the characteristics of the Armed Forces children and young people who are eligible for funding.

Chapter 5 addresses the question 'What can be funded?'. It is intended to provide insights around how beneficiaries and their needs are identified, the key times at which support is provided, the types of support that are funded and the nature of funding given to organisations.

Chapter 6 investigates the question 'What is the role of monitoring and evaluation?'. It aims to provide an overview of what is currently known about monitoring practices in relation to funding for Armed Forces children and young people, funders' requirements for evaluation, and what funders perceive to be barriers and enablers to evaluation.

Chapter 7 turns to the final question ‘What is the role of collaboration?’. This chapter is intended to give insights into the extent of collaboration, funders’ awareness and ease of engaging with potential collaborators, the perceived effects of, and barriers and enablers to, collaboration, and perceptions of the almonisation process (through which funders collectively gather and distribute funding). Chapter 8 brings together the findings, and presents conclusions and recommendations.

As detailed in the ‘Methodology’ section on page xxi, the Directory of Social Change (DSC)’s researchers employed various research methods to provide a comprehensive overview of the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people. Throughout this report, desk research is presented in blue boxes, the survey findings appear in green boxes, the interview quotes are shown in orange boxes and the case study content is identified in purple boxes.

TERMINOLOGY

This report uses a number of key terms. Definitions of **Armed Forces children and young people** vary across different organisations and regions of the UK. This report employs the term ‘Armed Forces children and young people’, also known as ‘Service children’, to refer to ‘a person whose parent, or carer, serves in the regular Armed Forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person’s life’ (SCiP Alliance, 2022a). However, the working definitions of the organisations featured in this report may be broader or narrower than this.

Another key aspect of the terminology to note is the distinction between **Armed Forces charities** and other registered charities (which have more general charitable purposes). This report follows the definition of an Armed Forces charity originally developed for DSC’s 2016 *Sector Insight* report:

[Armed forces charities are] charities that are established specifically to support past and present members of the armed forces and their families (the armed forces community). In this context, an armed forces charity must be able to apply this definition to their beneficiaries.

(Cole and Traynor, 2016, p. 24)

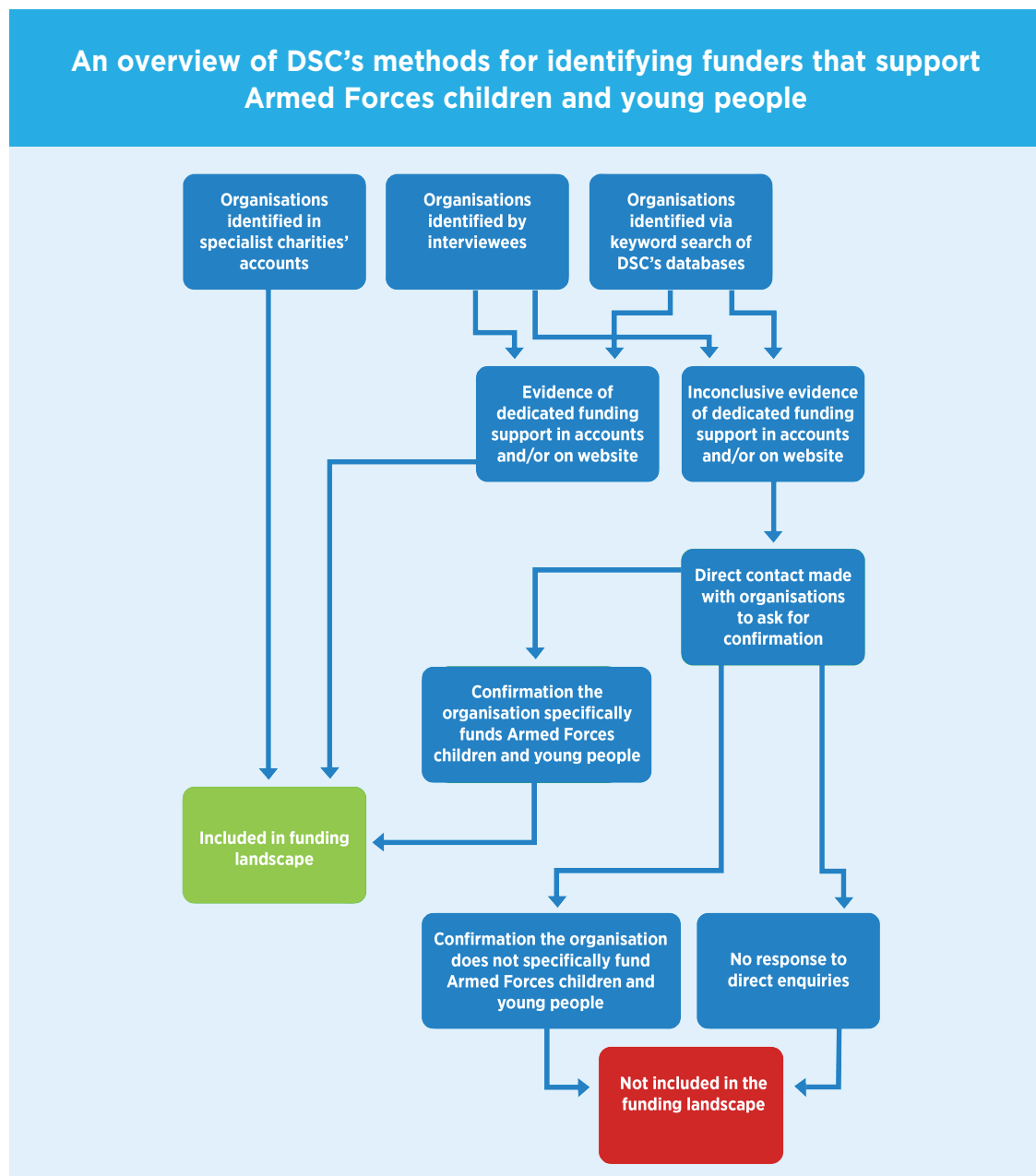
As of July 2022, DSC’s data indicates that the total number of Armed Forces charities operating in the UK is 1,755 (DSC, 2022).

In the outline of the research methodology (see below), the term **grant-making Armed Forces charities** refers to charities that are registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (CCEW) or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and that explicitly include making grants to individuals or organisations as part of their charitable activities. It is important to note that not all of these charities will make grants in practice; as described below, DSC’s researchers looked for evidence beyond their regulator profiles when identifying the funders in this report. This term is not used to refer to Armed Forces charities registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) because the necessary information is not included in the CCNI’s downloadable data.

METHODOLOGY

In consultation and collaboration with the Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance and the Naval Children's Charity, DSC's researchers undertook a multifaceted approach to identifying the organisations that provide funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people (i.e. the organisations featured in chapter 2 of this report) and gathering insights about the nature of this funding. The key aspects of this process are described in the following sections and can also be found in figure I.1.

Figure I.1



Desk-based investigation of the charities in DSC’s databases

The first stage of identifying funders that support Armed Forces children and young people involved DSC’s researchers carrying out a desk-based analysis of the two data sets created and maintained by DSC. First, a database of Armed Forces charities, which contains information on 1,755 active Armed Forces charities (at the time of data collection – July 2022) and is updated monthly as part of DSC’s ongoing research into Armed Forces charities, funded by Forces in Mind Trust. Second, the Funds Online subscription database, which contains information on over 8,000 grant-makers that provide funding to individuals and organisations.

DSC’s researchers undertook a keyword search on the charitable objects of grant-making Armed Forces charities (returning just under 450 results) and on the information compiled by DSC’s researchers in the Funds Online database (returning over 400 results). The keywords used to identify potential funders are reproduced in table I.1.

Table I.1

Keywords used in DSC’s searches				
child*	dependent	famil*	son	young
daughter	descendant	pupil	student	
dependant	descendent	school	study	

Note: Asterisks denote a ‘wildcard’ search, where the remaining characters of the word can be matched by any character (e.g. or famil[y] or famil[ies]).

The organisations returned from this keyword search were systematically checked for evidence of support for Armed Forces children and young people through evaluation of the data held in DSC’s databases, the organisations’ most recent annual accounts and return (accessed via the relevant charity regulator), and, where possible, their website.¹ As the grant-making status of charities registered with CCNI could not be ascertained from CCNI’s downloadable data, all Armed Forces charities registered with CCNI were systematically checked for evidence; however, none met the criteria for inclusion in this research.

Specifically, DSC’s researchers were looking for evidence of:

- funding streams or grant programmes which provide funding directly to Armed Forces children and young people (or a parent or carer on their behalf);
- funding for organisations which specialise in providing support to Armed Forces children and young people;
- funding for other, non-specialist organisations with the expressed remit of providing support to Armed Forces children and young people.

¹ It is important to note that association branches were not included in this process. Instead, evidence was sought through their respective corporate bodies. This decision was made for methodological reasons: the information available in association branches’ charitable accounts and websites was often limited and inconsistent. This is not to suggest that these charities do not provide funding for Armed Forces children and young people: indeed, DSC’s interviews provide evidence to the contrary (see chapter 3).

Direct communication with potential funders

As noted in the previous sub-section, DSC identified a number of organisations that gave some indication of providing support for Armed Forces children and young people but for which conclusive evidence could not be ascertained using information in the public domain. Where these organisations had an email address published with their relevant regulator (CCEW, CCNI or OSCR), they were contacted by DSC's researchers: in total, there were 200 such organisations.

Therefore, DSC's researchers directly contacted these organisations. They were invited to confirm whether they provide grants that are specifically intended to support Armed Forces children and young people, whether directly (through grants to individuals) or indirectly (through grants for organisations).

Following two attempts at contact, DSC received responses from approximately two-fifths of the organisations that were contacted directly. Many of these organisations provided a clear indication of the areas they support, and the majority of the responses included details concerning their support for Armed Forces children and young people. The information provided in response to DSC's enquiry was evaluated for evidence of support in accordance with the criteria outlined on page xxii.

It is important to note that this aspect of DSC's methodology resulted in the identification of a greater number of funders that support Armed Forces children and young people than would otherwise have been possible. However, an important limitation is that responses were not obtained from all of these organisations; therefore, there may still be funders that DSC's researchers could not identify.

Investigation of specialist organisations' accounts and annual reports

In the context of this report, a specialist child-focused organisation is defined as an organisation that has been set up with the specific intention of supporting Armed Forces children and young people as a central tenet of its work. The specialist child-focused *funders* detailed in section 2.2 of this report are a particular subset of these specialist organisations.

To identify specialist organisations, DSC's researchers drew on their knowledge of the Armed Forces charity sector, held conversations with the project partners and interviewees, and checked through DSC's Armed Forces charities database. DSC's researchers also carried out desk-based research to identify funders of specialist organisations – where available, the latest accounts and annual reports of the specialist organisations were investigated. DSC's researchers retrieved the names – and, where applicable, charity numbers – of the bodies that funded the specialist organisations.

Interviews with funders and stakeholders

DSC undertook ten interviews with a range of charities and statutory organisations that fund support for Armed Forces children and young people. The interviews took place between August and October 2022, via Zoom or Teams video calls.

It is important to note that, as well as several independent organisations, interviewees included partner organisations (representatives from the SCiP Alliance and the Naval Children's Charity) and members of the SCiP Alliance Funders' Forum, who were also involved in this research project in a steering group capacity.

DSC's researchers asked the interviewees a series of questions that aimed to find out more about their funding for Armed Forces children and young people. A semi-structured approach was taken, which allowed DSC's researchers to ask a mixture of prepared and improvised questions in relation to the following topics:

- how each organisation funded Armed Forces children and young people;
- how each organisation decided on its funding priorities for Armed Forces children and young people;
- how the beneficiaries of each organisation typically found out about each organisation's funding support;
- interviewees' perceived barriers and enablers around Armed Forces children and young people's access to funding;
- interviewees' knowledge of the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people;
- to what extent their organisation partnered with others to deliver funding for Armed Forces children and young people.

The interviews also had a consultancy function, enabling researchers to ask for interviewees' perspectives on which organisations should be included in the survey component of this research (see page xxvi).

DSC's researchers recorded and subsequently analysed each interview. Specifically, transcripts and notes were comprehensively annotated with, first, broad themes (for example, the advantages of partnership) and, second, narrower sub-themes (for example, the sharing of resources or the avoidance of duplication).

A selection of verbatim interview quotes appears throughout the report. These quotes are primarily used to supplement the survey findings by providing context and a wider range of perspectives. All ten interviewees' perspectives are included, and care has been taken to avoid the overrepresentation of any individual interviewee. Moreover, DCS's researchers have sought to ensure a balanced range of perspectives on individual topics, including divergent opinions where these have been expressed.

In addition to this more formal interview process, DSC's researchers also directly contacted two primary schools (one in England and one in Wales) and three local authorities (one in each of England, Wales and Scotland) to investigate how they accessed and used funding to support Armed Forces children and young people. These schools and local authorities were selected because they represented areas within different devolved nations that had relatively high populations of Armed Forces children and young people or were identified by interviewees as having received relevant funding. Information gathered from for some of

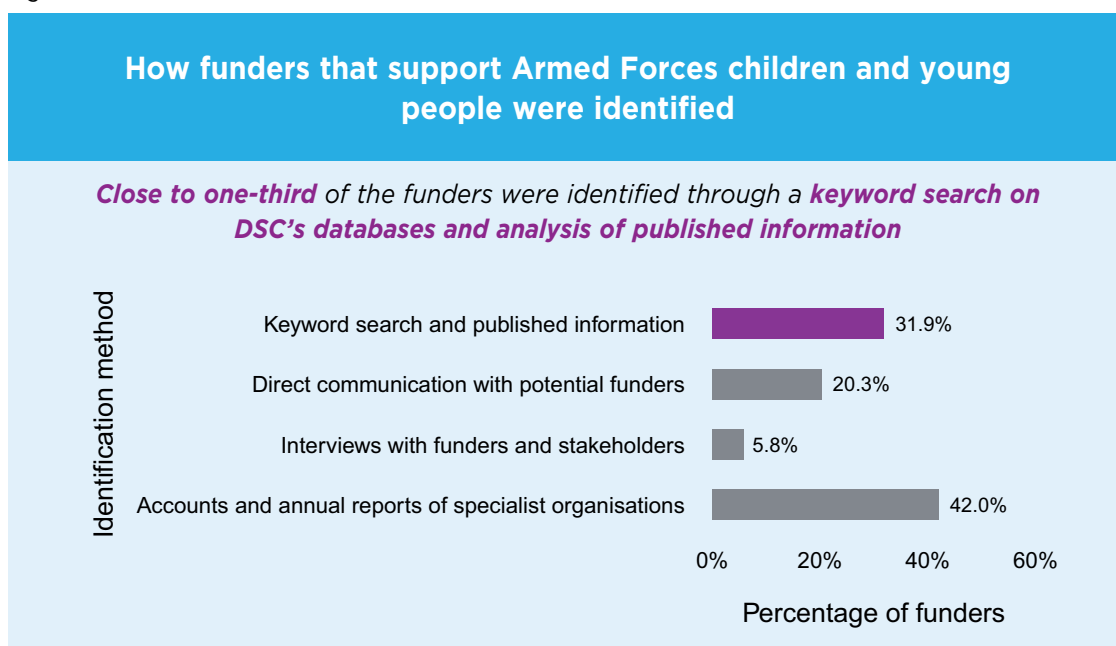
these schools and local authorities through video calls and email correspondence is presented in case studies.

Summary of how funders were identified

Figure I.2 shows the methods DSC’s researchers used to identify the funders included in DSC’s landscape of funders (see chapter 2). Overall, close to one-third (31.9%) of the funders (i.e. those where there was evidence of them providing funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people) were identified on the basis of keyword searches on the two databases maintained by DSC and subsequent evaluation of these organisations’ published information.

The remaining two-thirds (68.1%) of funders were identified through the alternative mechanisms noted above: just over two-fifths (42.0%) of funders were identified through the accounts and annual reports of specialist organisations; approximately one-fifth (20.3%) of funders were identified through direct communication in response to enquiries from DSC’s researchers; and 5.8% were identified through interviews with funders and stakeholders, such as members of the SCiP Alliance Funders’ Forum and other organisations that fund support for Armed Forces children and young people.

Figure I.2



Note: Funders could be identified through more than one mechanism but have been categorised under only one, with primacy given in the following order: keyword search on DSC’s databases and analysis of published information, direct communication with potential funders, interviews with funders and stakeholders, and information in accounts and annual reports of specialist organisations. Therefore, a funder that was identified through the keyword search on DSC’s databases and analysis of published information is reported as such, irrespective of whether they also appeared in the accounts of a specialist organisation or were raised in an interview.

Survey of funders supporting children and young people

All of the organisations that were identified as providing funding for Armed Forces children and young people – whether through funding for organisations or grants made to individuals – were invited to respond to a survey. Unless the evidence in their survey responses indicated that they did not fund support for Armed Forces children and young people, they are included in the landscape of funders detailed in chapter 2.

DSC's survey was available for the respondents to complete between 3 October and 25 October 2022. The survey questions were based on the insights provided from DSC's direct contact with potential funders, earlier interviews with charities and statutory bodies operating in this area, and consultations with the SCiP Alliance and the Naval Children's Charity. Topics included:

- how respondents funded support for Armed Forces children and young people;
- which groups of Armed Forces children and young people could receive their support;²
- the types of support they funded and at what key stages they offered support;
- which organisations were funded and how that funding was spent;
- whether and how funding was evaluated;
- collaboration in funding for Armed Forces children and young people.

Representativeness of the survey respondents

DSC received 39 valid responses to the survey. The vast majority (84.6%) of these responses were from registered charities, 5.1% were from businesses and 10.3% were from other types of organisation.

Not all of the survey respondents identified their organisation. Notwithstanding this limitation, DSC's researchers analysed the funding landscape to see how the survey respondents (specifically, those that identified their organisation) differed from those who did not respond to the survey (but were part of the funding landscape).

As shown in figures I.3 through to I.5 below, this analysis suggested that:

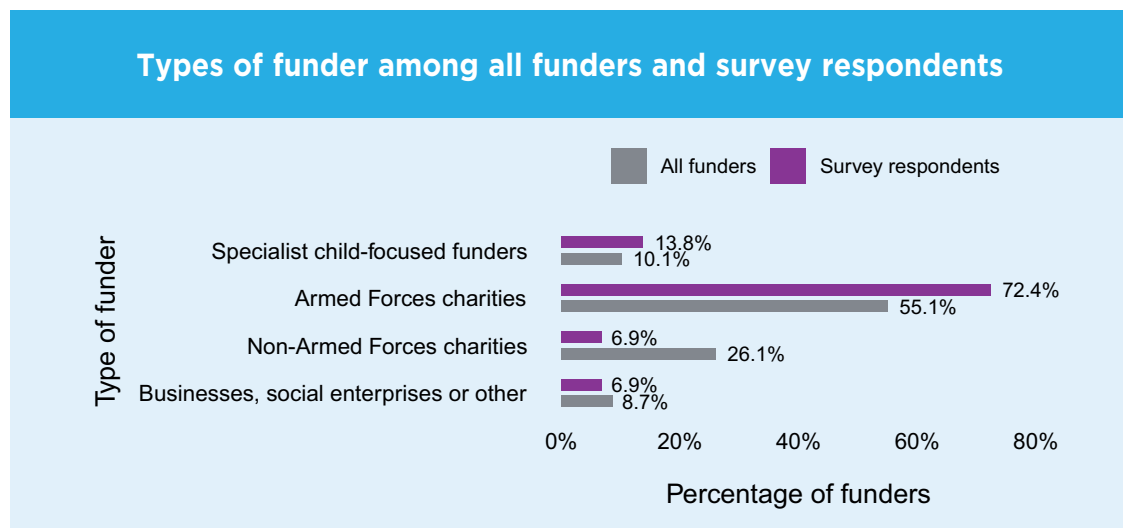
- Specialist child-focused funders (funders with a central focus on Armed Forces children and young people) and Armed Forces charities (which fund support for Armed Forces children and young people as part of their broader support for the Armed Forces community) were over-represented and non-Armed forces charities were under-represented among the survey respondents in comparison with the landscape of funders overall.

² Eligibility was the focus of this section of the survey because it had the potential to be broader than the Armed Forces children and young people that the respondents currently or typically did support at the time of the survey.

- Charities of different sizes were relatively evenly represented among the survey respondents in comparison with the landscape of funders overall.
- Funders with a tri-Service affiliation were somewhat under-represented and funders with a British Army affiliation were somewhat over-represented among the survey respondents in comparison with the funders in DSC's funding landscape overall, and no funders affiliated with the Royal Air Force completed the survey.³

This suggests the organisations that responded to DSC's survey are, overall, broadly representative of the landscape of funders described in chapter 2. However, the differences described above (in relation to types of organisation and Service branch affiliation) suggest that there are some limitations as to how far the survey findings can be interpreted as representative of the broader landscape of funders.

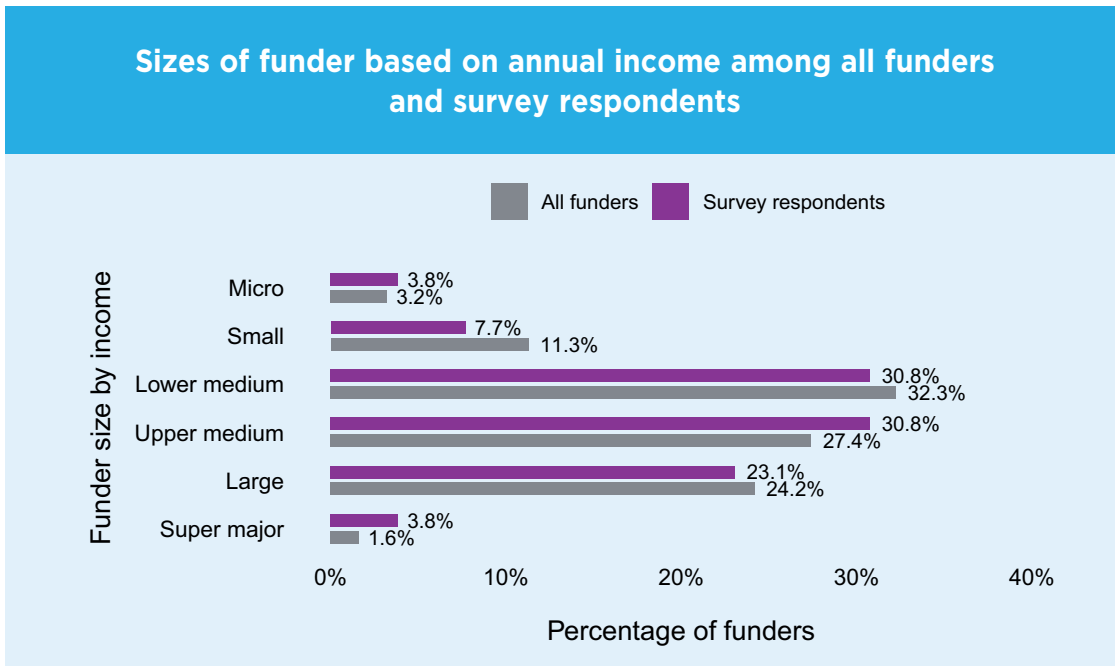
Figure 1.3



Note: Data on all funders is based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders' websites) collected by DSC's researchers on each of the 69 funders of Armed Forces children and young people. Data on the survey respondents is limited to those that identified their organisation (N=29).

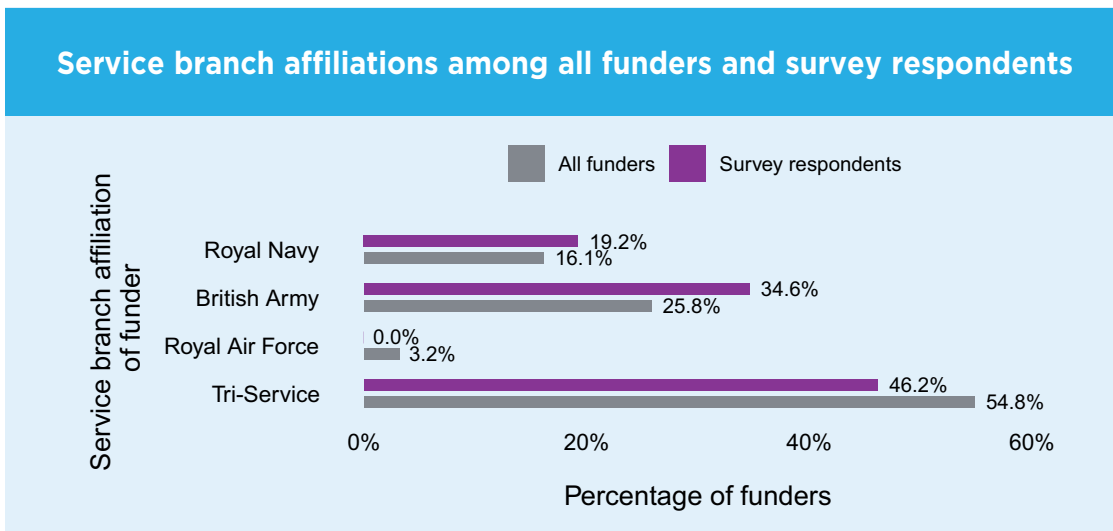
³ For non-Armed Forces charities, information was collated from accounts, annual reports and websites to determine whether they provided funding that supports children and young people in Royal Navy and Royal Marines families, British Army families, Royal Air Force families or any type of Armed Forces family (tri-Service). The Armed Forces charities in DSC's database already had a Service branch affiliation specified.

Figure 1.4



Note: Data on all funders is based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders' websites) collected by DSC's researchers on each of the funders of Armed Forces children and young people that are registered charities (N=62). Data on the survey respondents is limited to registered charities that identified their organisation (N=26). Micro charities have annual incomes of under £10,000, small charities have annual incomes of between £10,000 and £100,000, lower-medium charities have annual incomes of between £100,000 and £500,000, upper-medium charities have annual incomes of between £500,000 and £5 million, large charities have annual incomes of between £5 million and £100 million and super major charities have annual incomes of over £100 million.

Figure 1.5



Note: Data on all funders is based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders' websites) collected by DSC's researchers on each of the funders of Armed Forces children and young people (N=69), as defined in the 'Terminology' section on page xx. Data on the survey respondents is limited to those that identified their organisation (N=29).

CHAPTER ONE

Context



1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief overview of some of the unique challenges and stressors which Armed Forces children and young people may experience, drawing upon the limited existing body of literature which focuses on this population's needs.

1.2 DEFINITION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

When referring to Armed Forces children and young people, this report adopts the Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance's definition: 'a person whose parent, or carer, serves in the regular Armed Forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life' (SCiP Alliance, 2022a).

However, different statutory bodies, charities and organisations that support Armed Forces children and young people may apply their own narrower or broader definitions. For instance, some of the organisations whose representatives were interviewed for this report adopt a flexible approach to age ranges in instances where their beneficiaries have additional learning needs or disabilities.

The total number of Armed Forces children and young people in the UK remains unknown. However, data gathered by the Ministry of Defence (MOD), schools and the national census can help to provide some insights into this population.

The MOD's 2022 Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey found that 78% of serving families had children. Over half (54%) of the Service families which responded to the survey had school-age children and one-third (33%) had children under five (MOD, 2022a). Based on the fact that the strength of the UK Armed Forces was 158,000 as of January 2022, it is possible to provide a conservative estimate that there are at least 123,240 Service children and young people in the UK (MOD, 2022b).

The number of children and young people in ex-Service families is currently unknown. The 2021 Census revealed that there are 1.85 million ex-Service personnel living in the UK. A total of 1.7 million households contain a veteran (7% of all households) (ONS, 2022a). Further information on the number of ex-Service personnel living with children and young people is due to be published by the Office of National Statistics in 2023, and this will provide the first accurate estimate of the size of this population (ONS, 2022b).

School records can also help with estimating the number of Armed Forces children and young people of statutory school age. During 2022, approximately 79,000 Armed Forces children and young people were eligible to receive the Service Pupil Premium (SPP), which is a per-pupil funding allocation available to English state schools to provide pastoral care to Armed Forces children and young people (Roberts et al., 2022).

The SCiP Alliance's Online Targeting Tool provides regularly updated data on the regional distribution of school-age Armed Forces children and young people in receipt of SPP across England (SCiP Alliance, 2022b).

However, as the SPP is only available in England and relies on families to self-identify their Service or ex-Service status, this can only provide a low estimate. It does not include Armed Forces children and young people in other regions of the UK, those who attend private schools or those whose parents served more than six years ago.

In Wales, Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) is a Welsh Local Government Association programme which has worked closely with schools and local authorities to collate data that provides regular snapshots of the approximate number of Armed Forces children and young people enrolled in schools across Wales. As of March 2022, there were 2,677 children from Armed Forces families enrolled in independent and state schools throughout Wales (SSCE Cymru, 2022a). No equivalent data-collecting organisations currently exist in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

1.3 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY ARMED FORCES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Being a member of an Armed Forces family does not necessarily mean that children will experience problems outside the experiences of their civilian peers. In fact, a recent study commissioned by the Naval Children's Charity reported numerous positive aspects of Service life for children, including 'pride, financial security, novel experiences, being part of the military community, increased resilience and discipline, and having positive role model' (Godier-McBard et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, Armed Forces children and young people may face unique challenges or stressors which stem from their parents' Service, some of which are outlined below.

1.3.1 Separation during deployment

Deployment is a consistent feature of military life for many Service families, even during peacetime. In fact, the MOD's *Living in Our Shoes* report observed that 'the tempo of deployments has increased over the years' since the Iraq and Afghanistan wars (Walker et al., 2020, p. 50). Only 22% of Service families experienced no separation during 2022, according to the MOD's latest Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey (MOD, 2022a). A significant body of UK research highlights parental separation as one of the key challenges faced by serving families (Godier-McBard et al., 2021; Walker et al., 2020).

However, there remains a lack of consensus across the existing academic literature on the impact of parental deployment. Some studies have found a link between separation during deployment, on the one hand, and emotional and behavioural difficulties and increased anxiety, on the other. However, others have found no increase in behavioural problems during separation (Godier-McBard et al., 2021).

Notably, deployment can result in a temporary lone-parent household, which can present problems such as a lack of an appropriate role model and a strained parent-child relationship. Readjusting to life after deployment can present its own challenges; renegotiating roles and parental responsibilities may cause anxiety for both the returning parent and the child, and it can be difficult to re-establish bonds, particularly with younger children (Godier-McBard et al., 2021). A literature review undertaken by the University of Winchester further found that deployment leads to increased rates of children acting as carers for other family members while the serving parent is away (McCulloch and Hall, 2016).

The number of serving families 'weekending' has increased in recent years. This arrangement involves the serving partner living separately from their family during the week and returning home for weekends. Existing evidence suggests that frequent separation can have a negative impact on children's mental health, and being geographically dispersed can reduce families' access to support from the military community (Godier-McBard et al., 2021).

The impact of separation varies by Service branch. Royal Navy families experience particularly high levels of separation, with longer deployments and families being more likely to live geographically separately from the serving person (Godier-McBard et al., 2021; Walker

et al., 2020). Previous research findings indicate that the more time serving personnel spend away from home, the greater the stress on family life and relationships (Walker et al., 2020).

The impact of separation may also differ depending on the age of the child; a 2019 NSPCC study found that young children were particularly confused and upset by parental absences, resulting in behavioural problems and bed-wetting (McConnell et al., 2019). In contrast, older children and young people have reported parental deployment being a particular stressor during exams (Walker et al., 2020).

While technologies such as social media offer increased opportunities for Armed Forces children and young people to keep in touch with their serving parent during deployment, social media use can present some unique challenges for Armed Forces children and young people – for example, seeing a post about armed conflict might be more upsetting to an Armed Forces child than to a civilian child. Additionally, some serving personnel may be in circumstances where contact opportunities are limited – for example, submariners, those on deployment to conflict zones and those on special operations (Walker et al., 2020).

1.3.2 Mobility

Just over a fifth (22%) of Service families had moved for Service-related reasons in the past year, according to the MOD's latest Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey. Just over two-fifths (41%) had moved at least twice for Service reasons during the past five years (MOD, 2022a). Frequent moves can have a significant emotional impact on children who leave friends and family behind; on the other hand, some studies suggest that frequent moves can help to build social skills and resilience (Godier-McBard et al., 2021).

Mobility can have a disruptive effect on education and academic outcomes. Overall, Armed Forces children and young people's levels of educational attainment are similar to or better than those of their peers (SCiP Alliance, 2022a; Walker et al., 2020). However, there are indications that mobile Armed Forces children and young people do not perform as well as non-mobile Armed Forces children and young people, with limited evidence showing that fewer children from Armed Forces families proceed to university education at the age of 18 than their peers (Godier-McBard et al., 2021).

Practical challenges associated with moving to a new school can include difficulties securing a school space, inadequate transfer of school records, and repeating or missing elements of the curriculum. As highlighted in the MOD's *Living in Our Shoes* report, the level and quality of support for Armed Forces children and young people may vary considerably from school to school. Schools with a high percentage of pupils from Armed Forces families or those close to a large barracks are much more likely to better understand and respond to their needs (Walker et al., 2020).

Moving schools can be particularly challenging for students with upcoming exams and children with additional learning needs, who may struggle to find a school with the specialist staff or resources to support them. The number of Armed Forces children and young people in the UK with special educational needs or a disability is unknown (Godier-McBard et al., 2021). This data gap presents a major challenge in understanding the needs of this population.

Difficulties accessing specialist learning provision may be further exacerbated when families move across regional borders. Each country within the UK adheres to different definitions of additional learning needs, and each has its own systems in place to allocate funding and resources, which parents must learn to navigate (see section 2.4.5 for further information).

Access to health services can also be something of a postcode lottery across the UK, which may present challenges for children with significant health issues or disabilities which require specialist care. *Living in Our Shoes* highlighted the difficulties many Armed Forces families face in accessing adequate and timely health care in the UK as a result of frequent moves and urged the need to improve continuity of care (Walker et al., 2020).

1.3.3 Bereavement

There has been a downward trend in the rate of deaths among UK serving personnel over the past ten years (MOD, 2022c). The number of deaths of Service personnel fell sharply after 2012 with the drawdown of military operations in Afghanistan and subsequent withdrawal of large numbers of UK troops in 2014 (MOD, 2022c).

During 2021, there were 71 deaths recorded across all three Service branches of the UK Armed Forces. Overall, in 2021, members of the UK regular Armed Forces were at a statistically significant lower risk of dying compared to the UK general population. Rates of suicide among serving personnel were also lower than in the civilian population during 2021 (MOD, 2022c).

Bereavement can have a huge impact on the lives of Armed Forces children and young people who experience it, just as it can do for children in the civilian population. Yet, there is a significant lack of UK-based research exploring the impact of parental death and suicide on children and young people who are specifically from Armed Forces families (Godier-McBard et al., 2021).

International research suggests that in instances where the surviving parent has pre-existing mental health needs, children may struggle to adjust following the bereavement (Godier-McBard et al., 2021). Several studies also highlight the stigma associated with suicide in many Armed Forces families, which can serve as a barrier to seeking help and social support. However, having support from the wider Armed Forces community and strong family cohesion have been cited as positive factors in helping Armed Forces children and young people to adjust following bereavement (Godier-McBard et al., 2021).

1.3.4 A need for further research

This section has briefly outlined some of the challenges which children may experience as a result of a parent's Service. There are still significant gaps in the existing literature, which currently limits funders' abilities to access a comprehensive picture of Armed Forces children and young people's needs and develop evidence-based funding strategies in response. Notably, a greater wealth of UK research has been focused around education and academic progression than on other topics such as health and bereavement.

Moreover, there remains a lack of UK-centred research which adopts a 'child-led' approach by including Armed Forces children and young people directly. There have been increased calls for further research which listens to Armed Forces children and young people's voices and captures their 'views, experiences and priorities', thereby empowering them to directly influence practice and policy (Hall, 2020).

Recent research commissioned by the Naval Children's Charity concluded that overall, in regard to understanding the needs of Armed Forces children and young people, there is 'a general lack of awareness and understanding among education and healthcare professionals, politicians and policy makers'. The researchers warn that, currently, a lack of 'culturally competent support' for Armed Forces children and young people 'may mean that professionals and practitioners are not always able to support their needs' (Godier-McBard et al., 2021, p. 95).

CHAPTER TWO

How many funders are there?



2.1 INTRODUCTION

As noted in the introduction to this report, a key aim of this research was to provide, for the first time, a systematic and rigorous account of the landscape of funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people. This chapter aims to provide a robust guide to the number of funders that provide support for Armed Forces children and young people in the UK, the different types of funder, and some of the challenges in identifying these funders.

This chapter draws primarily on desk-based research to answer the following questions:

- How many funders support Armed Forces children and young people?
- Is this number of funders large or small?

- What types of funder support Armed Forces children and young people?
- What challenges exist when identifying these funders?

The chapter also draws on the Directory of Social Change (DSC)'s interviews with funders and stakeholders, and a series of case studies are presented to provide additional insights. Throughout this report, the desk research is presented in blue boxes, the survey findings are in green boxes, the interview quotes are shown in orange boxes and the case study content is identified in purple boxes.

2.2 HOW MANY FUNDERS SUPPORT ARMED FORCES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

For the purpose of this report, a funder that supports Armed Forces children and young people is defined as showing evidence of one or more of the following:

- funding streams or grant programmes which provide funding directly to Armed Forces children and young people (or a parent or carer on their behalf);
- funding for organisations which specialise in providing support to Armed Forces children and young people;
- funding for other, non-specialist organisations with the expressed remit of providing support to Armed Forces children and young people.

Applying these criteria to a multitude of data sources (see the 'Methodology' section on page xxi for details), DSC's researchers identified 69 organisations.

DSC's researchers also identified several mechanisms or funding streams through which the UK government and devolved administrations provide funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people; however, they have not been labelled as 'funders' in this report, as they are more complex systems with multiple organisations involved in their funding and management structures.

2.3 IS THIS NUMBER OF FUNDERS LARGE OR SMALL?

To answer this question, DSC's researchers analysed the total number of funders that support Armed Forces children and young people that meet DSC's definition of an Armed Forces charity (N=44, see the 'Terminology' section on page xx) in relation to the Armed Forces charity sector more broadly. The focus of this section is on Armed Forces charities because they make up the majority of funders identified and serve a relevant and defined population (the Armed Forces community). DSC also maintains a regularly updated database of Armed Forces charities, which provides a clear reference group that is not available for other categories of funder.

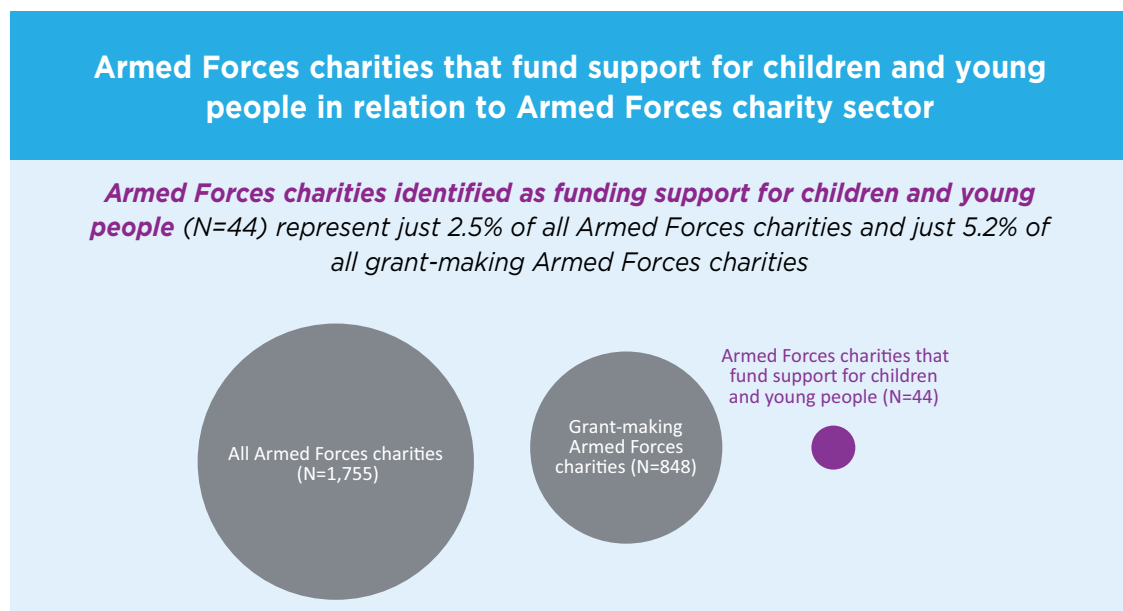
As shown in figure 2.1, Armed Forces charities that had evidence of funding support for Armed Forces children and young people (N=44) represent just 2.5% of all Armed Forces charities (N=1,755) and just 5.2% of all grant-making Armed Forces charities (N=848).¹ Similar

¹ At the time of data collection, the total number of Armed Forces charities on DSC's database was 1,755. Of these Armed Forces charities, 848 were identified - using data published on the Charity Commission for England and Wales (CCEW) or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) websites - as grant-making charities (see the 'Methodology' section on page xxi).

findings have emerged in other areas of DSC's previous research on Armed Forces charities. In particular, DSC's *Focus On* series explored topics of charitable support for the Armed Forces community, covering areas such as mental health, education, housing, physical health, criminal justice, families and finance. Throughout this series, DSC consistently found very small pockets of specialist provision across different areas of support.

While the proportion of ex-Service families that have children is currently unknown, an estimated 78% of Armed Forces families have children – and therefore have the potential to require or benefit from support through funding (MOD, 2022b). The fact that only a small minority of all Armed Forces charities were identified as having evidence of funding support for Armed Forces children and young people may suggest that the number of funders is somewhat low. However, this ultimately depends on how far the funding provided meets the needs of Armed Forces children and young people – and whether having more funders, as opposed to more funding, would better meet their needs.

Figure 2.1



Note: Data based on DSC's Armed Forces charities database. Figures for all Armed Forces charities and grant-making Armed Forces charities correct as of the time of data collection (July 2022).

2.4 WHAT TYPES OF FUNDER SUPPORT ARMED FORCES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

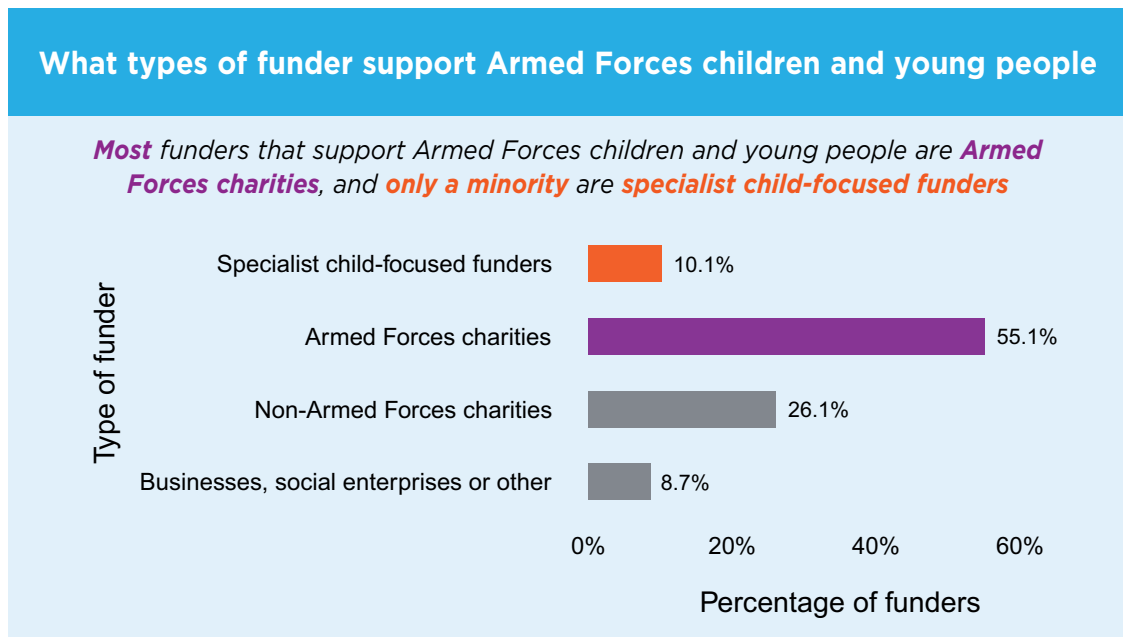
It is important to recognise that there is a variety of types of organisation among the 69 funders that provide support for Armed Forces children and young people. Indeed, DSC's methods for identifying funders that support Armed Forces children and young people were developed to encompass this heterogeneity (see the 'Methodology' section on page xxi).

To provide a broad overview of these different types of organisation, DSC’s researchers categorised the funders into the following five groups:

- specialist child-focused funders;
- Armed Forces charities;
- non-Armed Forces charities;
- businesses, social enterprises and other types of organisation;
- statutory funders.

As shown in figure 2.2, specialist child-focused funders (which are almost all Armed Forces charities but are categorised separately throughout most of this report) represent only 10.1% of the organisations identified as funding support for Armed Forces children and young people. Meanwhile, Armed Forces charities represent 55.1% and charities with more general charitable objectives represent 26.1%. Businesses, social enterprises and other types of organisation make up 8.7% of the funders identified by DSC. The statutory funders and funding streams are not included in figure 2.2, because they are more complex systems with multiple organisations involved in their funding and management structures.

Figure 2.2



Note: Based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders’ websites) collected by DSC’s researchers on each of the 69 funders of Armed Forces children and young people.

The following sections provide a more detailed overview of these different types of funder.

2.4.1 Specialist child-focused funders

For the purpose of this report, specialist child-focused funders are defined as organisations that provide funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people, and for which this is their core purpose or one of their central purposes. DSC's researchers identified seven organisations considered to be specialist child-focused funders of support for Armed Forces children and young people.

As shown in table 2.1, six of these organisations were registered charities (all of which were Armed Forces charities as defined in the introduction – see the 'Terminology' section on page xx), while one, SSCE (Supporting Service Children in Education) Cymru, was a Welsh Local Government Association project funded by the Welsh government.

As shown in figure 2.2 above, these specialist child-focused funders of Armed Forces children and young people represent only around one-tenth (10.1%) of the 69 funders identified in this report: specialist child-focused funders are only a small pocket of the funders providing support in this area. When placed in the context of the wider Armed Forces charity sector, the specialist Armed Forces charities (N=6) represent a tiny fraction of all Armed Forces charities and of all grant-making Armed Forces charities (less than 0.01% in each case).

Table 2.1

Specialist child-focused funders	
Funder name	Organisation type
The Alexander Duckham Memorial Schools Trust	Registered charity
Armed Forces Education Trust	Registered charity
Forces Children Scotland	Registered charity
Naval Children's Charity	Registered charity
Sailors' Children's Society	Registered charity
Scotty's Little Soldiers	Registered charity
Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru	Welsh Local Government Association project

Note: Based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders' websites) collected by DSC's researchers on each of the seven specialist child-focused funders of Armed Forces children and young people.

An example of a specialist funder can be found in the case study below, which focuses on SSCE Cymru. In Wales, SSCE Cymru plays an important role in the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people, as it receives funding from the Welsh government that can be awarded to local authorities to distribute to schools or spent more centrally.

Case study: Supporting Service Children in Education Cymru

Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru is a Welsh Local Government Association programme. It launched in 2014 and was initially funded by the Ministry of Defence (MOD)'s Education Support Fund but has been funded by the Welsh government since 2019 (SSCE Cymru, 2022a).

SSCE Cymru works with Armed Forces families, schools, local authorities, the Welsh government and education professionals to build networks and raise awareness of the experience of Armed Forces children and young people across Wales (SSCE Cymru, 2022b).

As explained in an interview with DSC, SSCE Cymru's mission is to support Armed Forces children and young people in Wales by providing knowledge and evidence on the experiences of Armed Forces children and young people; activities and resources for families, schools and local authorities (such as online toolkits for families, step-by-step funding guidance documents for schools and local authorities, and funding webinars for partner organisations); and policy and systems support by embedding research and resources within schools and local authorities and encouraging policy change at the level of the Welsh government or the MOD.

SSCE Cymru receives an annual pot of money (approximately £270,000) from the Welsh government to run the SSCE programme hosted by the Welsh Local Government Association. From this funding, £200,000 is allocated to be awarded to local authorities to distribute to schools or to spend more centrally (SSCE Cymru, 2022c).

The allocation of funding is strongly guided by a robust evidence base that SSCE Cymru has developed through ongoing research. SSCE Cymru gathers ongoing data on the estimated number of Armed Forces children and young people in Wales. Its research indicates that there were at least 2,677 Armed Forces children and young people in Welsh schools as of March 2022 (SSCE Cymru, 2022a). As of 2022, SSCE Cymru's process for distributing funding to schools and local authorities is based on the number of Armed Forces children and young people in their area, and resources are targeted to meet specific needs in each geographical area.

In addition, a survey is regularly sent to all schools with Armed Forces pupils in Wales to find out how they would like to use the money to support pupils from Armed Forces families. The results of the survey are subsequently distributed to Welsh local authorities to highlight what the schools in their local area think the money should be spent on. SSCE Cymru told DSC that the findings from the survey are updated and supplemented by new information as this becomes available throughout the year - for example, to allow funding to respond to changes in context (such as sudden changes in Armed Forces pupil numbers within a school).

The programme employs four regional liaison officers, each responsible for five to six local authorities and, typically, with a significant military base within their remit. SSCE Cymru liaison officers use their local knowledge to involve Armed Forces children and young people in the decision-making process around where funding should be spent.

Local authorities meet with liaison officers every quarter and develop a funding plan, set actions and implement funding decisions on how to best spend their funding allocation throughout the academic year. Liaison officers share their local and national knowledge and can advise local authorities and schools on what other resources they could tap into to best support local Armed Forces children and young people.

The funding can be spent on addressing any challenges that arise specifically from Service family life. For example, it might be used to fund a maths tutor for a child who has moved schools and missed out on some of the curriculum, to fund a teaching assistant to provide dedicated support when a child is dealing with the emotional impact of starting a new school, to provide Welsh lessons for an Armed Forces child who has relocated to Wales, or to provide team-building activities with a military theme for Armed Forces children and their peers.

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from SSCE Cymru in addition to publicly available information.

DSC's researchers also contacted Pembrokeshire County Council to learn more about how it, as a local authority in Wales, interacts with SSCE Cymru to access funding for local Armed Forces children and young people. Further information can be found in the case study on Pembrokeshire County Council below.

Case study: Pembrokeshire County Council

Wales is home to four significant military bases: RAF Valley on Anglesey; Infantry Battle School in Dering Lines, Powys; MOD St Athan in the Vale of Glamorgan; and - located in Pembrokeshire - the Cawdor Barracks. Due to this prominent military base, which houses the 14th Signal Regiment, Pembrokeshire County Council has one of the highest numbers of Armed Forces children and young people within its remit of all Welsh local authorities (SSCE Cymru, 2022a).

In order to provide funding for Armed Forces children and young people, Pembrokeshire County Council has primarily used funding from Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru. As described in a separate case study above, SSCE Cymru is a Welsh Local Government Association programme that provides funding to schools and raises awareness of Armed Forces children and young people's experiences throughout Wales.

In addition, Pembrokeshire County Council's Armed Forces Covenant liaison officer previously secured Armed Forces Covenant funding for Service families to access summer wellbeing provisions, and the Summer of Fun Welsh government fund was used for Service families during 2022.

To decide on its funding priorities for Armed Forces children and young people, Pembrokeshire County Council draws on survey research undertaken by SSCE Cymru. The council also works with schools through the senior regional school liaison officer (RSLO) - a member of the SSCE Cymru team hosted at the local authority - for Service children in West Wales. Together, this enables the council and SSCE Cymru to tailor their plans and objectives to suit the needs of the schools across the authority.

An example of a project Pembrokeshire County Council has funded - specifically through the Welsh government funding distributed through SSCE Cymru - is Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Haverfordwest. This project enabled a local school, Haverfordwest High, to have a key member of staff within the school to support Armed Forces children and young people and their families, including by providing tailored pastoral support. Having a SPOC at the school also contributed to the school's work to become the first in West Wales to achieve the Bronze Armed Forces Friendly Schools Cymru award.

Other projects funded by Pembrokeshire County Council include providing access to emotional literacy support assistant training and continued professional development training for school staff to enable them to better engage with the RSLO and enhance provision for support to Armed Forces children and young people (using SSCE Cymru tools and resources).

Through funding projects such as the examples above, the council has helped to ensure that schools with Armed Forces children and young people have a strong understanding of Armed Forces children and young people's experiences and needs, and of how they can best support the children and young people with any challenges they may be facing.

More broadly, Pembrokeshire County Council's funding has allowed Armed Forces children opportunities to meet and share their experiences through activity projects focused on health, wellbeing, resilience and team-building exercises. These events have been accessed by 180 Armed Forces children and young people within the county and, according to the council, have promoted resilience, team-building skills, social and communication skills, mutual learning and development, and social connections and belonging.

Note: The majority of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the local authority in addition to publicly available information.

2.4.2 Armed Forces charities

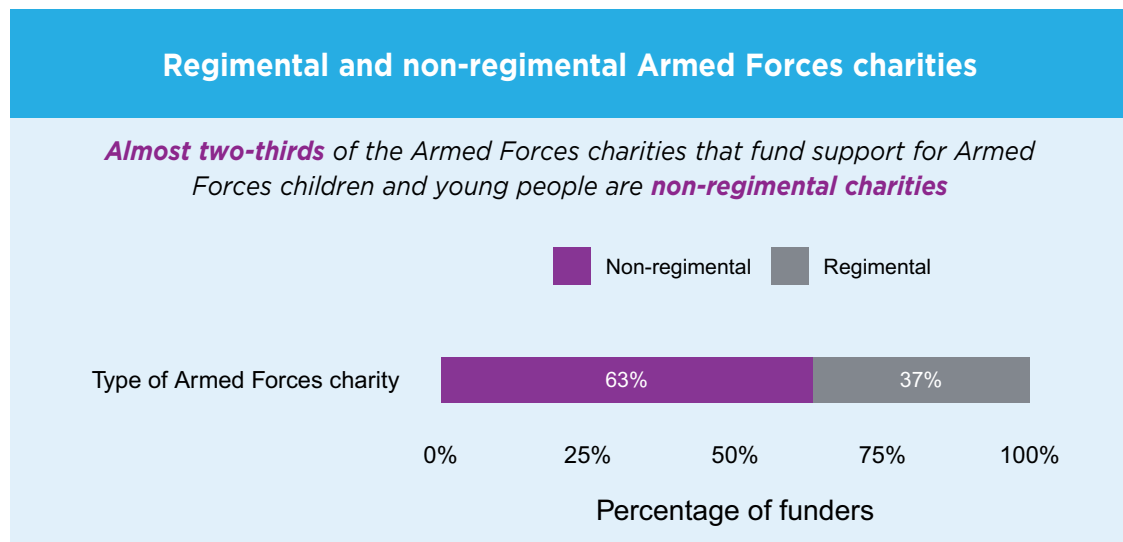
This chapter now turns to the Armed Forces charities in the funding landscape. Armed Forces charities are defined by DSC as ‘charities that are established specifically to support past and present members of the armed forces and their families’ (Cole and Traynor, 2016, p. 24). As non-specialist funders of Armed Forces children and young people, the Armed Forces charities in this section have a broader focus: support for children and young people forms just one element of their support within the Armed Forces community.

In total, DSC’s researchers identified 38 Armed Forces charities where there was evidence that they provide funding specifically intended to support Armed Forces children and young people. As shown in figure 2.2 above, Armed Forces charities represent over half (55.1%) of the 69 funders identified in this chapter.

These Armed Forces charities can be distinctly divided into regimental and non-regimental Armed Forces charities. Regimental funders are defined in this report as charities that are connected to a particular regiment. They are typically situated at Ministry of Defence (MOD) establishments and are staffed largely by MOD employees (Cole et al., 2020). Meanwhile, non-regimental Armed Forces charities are not connected to a particular regiment.

As shown in figure 2.3 below, almost two-thirds (63%) of the Armed Forces charities that fund support for Armed Forces children and young people are non-regimental charities and just over one-third (37%) are regimental charities.

Figure 2.3



Note: Based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders’ websites) collected by DSC’s researchers on the 38 funders of Armed Forces children and young people classed as Armed Forces charities (excluding specialist child-focused funders).

Non-regimental Armed Forces charities

In contrast to regimental charities, non-regimental Armed Forces charities are not connected with a particular regiment - but they may still have otherwise specific charitable objectives. DSC identified 24 non-regimental Armed Forces charities that provide funding intended to support Armed Forces children and young people. Further details on the specific charities identified can be found in the Appendix to this report (see table A.1).

The case study below provides an example of a non-regimental Armed Forces charity's funding in relation to Armed Forces children and young people. The case study focuses on SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, and in particular on SSAFA's less well-known Service committees, which provide funding for Armed Forces children and young people from serving families.

Case study: SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity

As the UK's longest-standing tri-Service charity - established in 1885 - SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity has been supporting the Armed Forces community for over a century (SSAFA, 2022).

SSAFA is well known for its case-working role in the grant-making landscape. As explained in section 7.8 of this report, the case-working system and almonisation process is a key mechanism through which individuals in the Armed Forces community access grants. Serving personnel and their families can apply to SSAFA directly for funding support or be referred via other organisations. SSAFA's casework team then carries out an assessment of the individual's or family's needs and responds accordingly by awarding a grant or referring the applicant to another charity better placed to help.

A less well-known aspect of SSAFA's work is its Service committees. Focusing on the Service community, these volunteer-delivered groups - located in areas around the UK and overseas - can provide support to Armed Forces children and young people by means of one-off grants, given directly to individuals or for organisations to fund projects.

In an interview, SSAFA told DSC that the work of its Service committees is important because circumstances can change quickly for families in the Service community. Therefore, an advantage of the Service committees' small grants is the speed with which they can be discreetly and confidentially distributed to the charity's beneficiaries. Cases of need come to the attention of a Service committee directly from the family or through unit welfare officers, other charities or local authorities. The committees aim to be reactive, responding to the needs of the Armed Forces child or young person at the time a need arises.

Service committee grants have been used for a variety of purposes when responding to the needs of Armed Forces children and young people. Some examples include small adaptations for children who need extra care support,

school uniforms, day trips for children and their families, and things like toys, books and games. The staff who work on SSAFA's Service committee grants collate information about how the funding they provide has been used to support their beneficiaries. This data is then used to understand trends with respect to the needs of those supported, including Armed Forces children and young people.

The grants from the Service committees complement SSAFA's broader work - in both the Service community and the ex-Service community - through its branches and case-working system (which are used for more complex cases).

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the organisation in addition to publicly available information.

Regimental Armed Forces charities

DSC's researchers identified 14 regimental Armed Forces charities that provide funding intended to support Armed Forces children and young people. Further details on the specific charities identified can be found in the Appendix to this report (see table A.1).

Thinking broadly about the process of grant-making, regimental charities occupy a unique position in the grant-making landscape. This is because they are often one of the first points of contact for serving and ex-Service personnel seeking welfare assistance (Cole et al., 2020). This was reflected in the interviews undertaken by DSC as part of this research - one interviewee stated that, with regard to seeking help for children and young people, regimental charities were often their first port of call for eligible families (see box 2.1).

Box 2.1

Interviewee comment on the unique position of regimental charities

All casework goes through the regiment and corps first. For example, if it's a family from the Rifles, it will go through the Rifles first, and, if it's not something that they can support with, then it will come to us.

Interviewee

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

The case study below provides an example of how a regimental charity, the Scots Guards Charity, funds support for Armed Forces children and young people. As noted in this case study, the Armed Forces children and young people that the Scots Guards Charity can support must have a connection to the regiment through their parents. This reflects the distinctness of regimental charities' eligibility criteria (discussed in section 4.4.5).

Case study: The Scots Guards Charity

The Scots Guards is an infantry regiment with both a combat role and a ceremonial role at Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace and other royal residences (Army, 2022). The Scots Guards Charity supports serving and ex-Service soldiers of the regiment and their families. It provides a range of financial assistance through grants to individuals, which can help with things like debt relief, respite breaks, mobility assistance, home improvement and educational support.

As with many other regimental charities, with respect to eligibility, the Scots Guards Charity can award grants to support Armed Forces children and young people whose parents are current or former members of the regiment.

Previous examples of grants made to support Armed Forces children and young people include a grant of £3,450 towards the education of a child with special education needs who had not been able to receive specialist support from the local authority. The charity's annual return for 2021 notes that this educational grant helped the child to access specialist education and relieved the parents of care and home tutoring duties, enabling them to return to work (Scots Guards Charity, 2021).

Among the other grants previously made by the Scots Guards Charity, funding has been provided to support Armed Forces children and young people's physical needs. This has included home and car adaptations to cater for reduced mobility where these were unavailable through mechanisms internal to the Ministry of Defence. Such support demonstrates one of the ways in which regimental funds can step in to provide support that cannot be obtained elsewhere (Scots Guards Charity, 2022).

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the organisation in addition to publicly available information.

2.4.3 Non-Armed Forces charities

Moving beyond Armed Forces charities, DSC's researchers also sought to identify registered charities that have more general charitable purposes (i.e. beyond supporting the Armed Forces community) but that nevertheless fund support for Armed Forces children and young people. This was achieved primarily through investigation of DSC's *Funds Online* database and through the interviews undertaken for this research (see the 'Methodology' section on page xxi for details).

Altogether, DSC identified 18 registered charities that fund support for Armed Forces children and young people. Further details on the specific charities identified can be found in the Appendix to this report (see table A.1). As shown in figure 2.2 above, this group represents 26.1% of all funders identified by DSC's researchers.

An example of a charity which has more general charitable purposes and supports Armed Forces children and young people - the British and Foreign School Society - can be found in the case study below.

Case study: British and Foreign School Society

The British and Foreign School Society (BFSS) operates in the UK and overseas, and provides grants for educational projects. BFSS was established at the beginning of the nineteenth century to facilitate and advance the work of a Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, who had set up the Society for Promoting the Lancasterian System for the Education of the Poor to address unequal access to education (BFSS, 2022a).

Today, BFSS funds international projects focused on the 'access, quality, and sustainability of education' and, in the UK, projects for young carers and care-experienced young people to further their educational outcomes and overall life chances (BFSS, 2022b). As part of its work to support young carers and care-experienced young people, in 2021, BFSS funded a variety of projects focusing on 'mentorship, training the education sector, and supporting families' (BFSS, 2022c, p. 30).

While BFSS is not focused exclusively on the Armed Forces community, this grant-giving organisation has nevertheless funded support for Armed Forces children and young people. Specifically, as part of its grant-making in 2020 and 2021, BFSS provided funds to Forces Children Scotland (BFSS, 2022c, p. 23). BFSS's two unrestricted grants to Forces Children Scotland have enabled that organisation to undertake projects such as an awareness-raising campaign, Ignite, which focused on young carers.

Young carers in Armed Forces families may care for their serving or non-serving parent, sibling(s), or any other family members affected by illness or disability, including mental health needs (Children's Society, 2017). Forces Children Scotland's Ignite campaign, produced in partnership with young people from Fife Young Carers, launched posters and online content in schools and community groups in Fife to raise awareness of life as a young carer from an Armed Forces or veteran family and encourage young carers to access support (Forces Children Scotland, 2022a).

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the British and Foreign School Society in addition to publicly available information.

2.4.4 Businesses, social enterprises and other types of organisation

DSC's research was focused on the charity sector but not limited to it: the researchers also identified six organisations that were neither registered charities nor statutory funders of support for Armed Forces children and young people (see table A.1). As shown in figure 2.2 above, this group represents 8.7% of the funders identified in this research.

Five of these organisations were classified as companies, social enterprises or other, and one was a 'unique Crown charity' (for further detail see Greenwich Hospital, 2022).

2.4.5 Statutory funders

The final key element in the funding landscape of support for Armed Forces children and young people is statutory funders. As the discussion below shows, in the UK, the existing statutory funding streams for Armed Forces children and young people predominately focus on education provision.

There are two main education-focused funding streams that support Armed Forces children and young people: the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) and the A3 Fund. Both of these, broadly speaking, seek to improve access to education and limit the potential disruptions of Service life – such as mobility and separation – to educational outcomes. The case studies below provide an overview of each scheme. Some of the interviewees who participated in this research shared their perspectives on these funding streams, which can be found later in this report (see box 5.4 in section 5.2).

Case study: Service Pupil Premium

The Department for Education launched the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in April 2011 as part of its commitment to delivering the Armed Forces Covenant. SPP funding enables schools to provide additional pastoral care to pupils with parents in the Armed Forces.

The SPP is available to state schools, academies and free schools in England with Service children enrolled in reception up to year 11. As of 2023, an annual payment of £320 per eligible Service child is awarded directly to qualifying schools (MOD, 2022d).

To be eligible to receive the SPP, pupils must meet at least one of the following criteria: have a parent serving in the regular Armed Forces or as a full-time reserve, have been registered as a 'Service child' on a school census since 2016, or have a parent who died while serving and be in receipt of a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pension Scheme (MOD, 2021a).

It is the responsibility of the serving or ex-Service parent to make the school aware of their child's status as a Service child. Service children must be recorded in the school's census ahead of the annual autumn deadline to receive SPP funding (MOD, 2021a).

Children of ex-Service personnel are eligible to receive funding for six years after a parent has left the Armed Forces, provided they have been recorded as a Service child on a school census since 2016 – a requirement known as the 'ever 6 service child measure'. Eligible Service children continue to receive the SPP if their parents divorce or a parent dies (MOD, 2021a).

The main purpose of the SPP is to help schools provide pastoral support, particularly during challenging times, such as when families move to a new location or a parent is on deployment. In this sense, the SPP differs significantly from the broader Pupil Premium scheme, which aims to raise attainment and progress within disadvantaged groups. Very few pupils from Armed Forces families are eligible to receive Pupil Premium (AFF, 2022).

During 2020/21, approximately 79,000 Service children were eligible for SPP funding. Official figures show that £25 million was allocated in the SPP to support Service children during this financial year. This accounted for 1% of the broader total Pupil Premium budget of £2.44 billion (Roberts et al., 2021).

Schools can take a flexible approach to how they use SPP funding to support the pastoral needs of their Service children. They can also opt to account for, and provide evidence of, their SPP spending as part of their broader annual Pupil Premium return. Some examples of best practices include holding counselling services, arranging Skype clubs or 'scrapbook clubs' (aimed at increasing communication between pupils and a deployed parent), providing military-themed school trips, and employing specialist staff members, such as mobility co-ordinators, Armed Forces liaison officers and parent support advisers (MOD, 2021a).

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the Department of Education and MOD in addition to publicly available information.

Case study: The AF3 Fund (formerly the Education Support Fund)

In 2011, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) launched the MOD Education Support Fund (ESF). The aim of this fund was to provide grants to schools to help them mitigate the effects that mobility and separation can have on Armed Forces children and young people's education (MOD, 2022e).

Following the publication of the UK Armed Forces Families Strategy 2022-32, the ESF transitioned - along with one other education-focused fund, the Early Learning and Childcare Support Fund - to become the new Armed Forces Families Fund (AF3) (MOD, 2022e).

Taking a broader approach than the ESF, the AF3 Fund aims to provide funding across the eight main themes of the strategy: family life, Service life, family home, education, health and wellbeing, childcare, support to partners and spouses, and non-UK families.

Since September 2022, the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (AFCFT) has been administering the grant-making process for the AF3 Fund. As part of this work, the AFCFT is managing the 2022/23 ESF programme, which was launched by the MOD in spring 2022. Applications to this programme can come from publicly funded schools, academies, free schools and sixth-form colleges that meet the eligibility criteria. Groups of schools can also apply together (in a process known as a 'cluster bid') and local authorities can also apply in support of schools.

In order to apply for AF3 funding, schools must have pupils from Armed Forces families enrolled whose parent(s) are subject to mobility and/or separation from family life for a continuous period of one month or more. Schools must also be able to provide evidence of the negative impact of this.

While under the auspices of the ESF, grants previously awarded to successful applicants have typically been in the region of £50,000 to £60,000 and have rarely exceeded £100,000. Successful funding applications must demonstrate that proposed projects represent good value for money and provide additional services not funded by the Service Pupil Premium (AFCT, 2022a).

In 2021, under the ESF, there were 115 applications from schools, which collectively requested just under £4.8 million. In total, 72 schools were awarded funding, which benefitted approximately 16,500 Armed Forces children and young people across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (RAF Families Federation, 2020). Looking to the coming financial year, there was £3 million for schools in AF3 funding in 2023, the application process for which closed at the end of September 2022 (RAF Families Federation, 2022).

Funding from the AF3 can be used to support Armed Forces children and young people in a variety of ways. Examples outlined in the guidance for applicants include funding for temporary staff (such as teachers, teaching assistants or

Service pupil liaison officers), training (such as in emotional literacy and emotional needs), activities, classroom resources and refurbishment of existing spaces (e.g. providing a forest school, library or sensory room) (AFCT, 2022b). Rounds of funding are approved annually and successful projects can receive funding for a period of up to one year.

In addition to the primary funding stream for schools, a new funding programme also opened in September 2022: the AF3 Early Years programme. This is intended to support children from Armed Forces families who are in early-years settings such as nurseries, which were formerly covered by the Early Learning and Childcare Support Fund. A third part of the AF3 Fund for 2023 is the Supporting Partners programme, primarily intended to support the spouses and partners of serving personnel.

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and MOD in addition to publicly available information.

The availability of funding streams provided by statutory bodies differs substantially by UK region. While the AF3 Fund is available nationally, SPP is available within England only. Therefore, in addition to SSCE Cymru in Wales, DSC communicated with government representatives in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland via interviews and email correspondence to better understand the various systems in place. Each devolved administration adopts its own autonomous approach to funding support for Armed Forces children and young people, which is often enshrined within each country's existing legislative policies on children's rights more broadly.

As highlighted by the interview quote in box 2.2, in Scotland, educational support for Armed Forces children and young people comes under the remit of the Scottish government's Getting It Right for Every Child policy and the Additional Support for Learning Act (2004), which provide schools with access to funding for pupils with additional support needs.

Box 2.2

Interviewee comment on the Scottish government's approach to funding

The SPP [Service Pupil Premium] is geared towards mitigating the effects of deployment and mobility. In Scotland we see this as encapsulated in the GIRFEC [Getting It Right for Every Child] model and by ASLA [Additional Support for Learning Act] legislation, which allows us to effectively provide what the SPP does in England.

Interviewee

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

Unlike in England, where SPP allocation is automatically awarded to every Armed Forces child whose eligible status has been declared, Scotland's model was described by a government representative interviewed by DSC as taking a needs-led approach, whereby Armed Forces children with additional support needs can access funding through the same channels as their civilian peers. The Scottish government gives grant funding to local authorities, which make decisions on which schools to award funding to on a case-by-case basis.

It is worth noting that Scotland's definition of 'additional support needs' is somewhat broader than the SEN (special educational needs) definition typically employed in England and Northern Ireland, encompassing a wider range of emotional and behavioural needs. For example, an Armed Forces child experiencing emotional distress or anxiety as a result of parental deployment or separation would qualify to receive funding support for additional support needs in Scotland but not necessarily in England or Northern Ireland.

Wales also uses separate terminology and definitions regarding additional support needs. Notably, the Additional Learning Needs Act (2021) replaced the previously used terms 'special educational needs' (SEN) and 'learning difficulties and/or disabilities' (LDD) with a new term - 'additional learning needs' (ALN) - to create one unified system (Welsh government, 2021). This new system extends the right to statutory provision to all learners with ALN, beyond the SEN definition commonly employed in England and Northern Ireland, which tends to be restricted to children and young people with the more complex needs (Welsh government, 2021).

The different systems in the devolved nations may create challenges for Armed Forces children and young people with ALN and their parents who move from one country to another: they must learn to navigate new systems, different terminology and possible changes in entitlement to what help they can receive in the classroom.

As highlighted by an interviewee in box 2.2, the approach adopted by the Scottish government reflects the fact that being from an Armed Forces family does not in itself mean a child will require additional support or resources in the classroom. However, for those who do need support due to the stressors of Service life, funding is available.

Although the Scottish government does not have a dedicated funding stream specifically for Armed Forces children and young people, there are key staff members embedded within the core government departments who have in-depth knowledge of the challenges faced by Armed Forces children and young people, and whose task it is to represent their interests. Members of the ALN team work closely with the MOD and other devolved nations to represent the voices of Scottish Armed Forces children and young people and share expertise.

Similarly, SPP is not available in Northern Ireland. However, there are other allowances available, such as a funding option providing support for children of Service personnel through the Common Funding Scheme. As in the case of SPP, parents must inform their child's school of their Service status and be declared on the annual school census to be eligible to receive funding. Qualification is typically limited to primary school pupils whose parent is a current member of the UK Armed Forces not normally resident in Northern

Ireland, and who has been posted to Northern Ireland for a period scheduled to last at least two years.

Broader access to funding support for Armed Forces children and young people in Northern Ireland is primarily the responsibility of the Army Welfare Service team at the 38 (Irish) Brigade, which delivers a wide range of welfare support to British Army families in addition to the relatively small numbers of RAF and navy personnel in Northern Ireland. The team also collaborates with various agencies, including the MOD's Armed Forces families and safeguarding team, to develop policy relating to Armed Forces children and young people in Northern Ireland. It is important to note that departments of state in Northern Ireland cannot formally engage in the delivery of support to serving and ex-Service families owing to the complex legislation underpinning the Good Friday Agreement.

SSCE Cymru (covered in the case study in section 2.4.1) is a unique organisation in that it awards funding directly to local authorities in Wales. Other devolved nations have forums or networks that are focused on fulfilling an advisory role, rather than providing funding. These forums or networks work alongside local authorities to ensure that the local authorities can provide appropriate support for Armed Forces children and young people.

For example, In England, the Ministry of Defence Local Authority Partnership (MODLAP) is a collaboration between the MOD and the 16 local authorities that have the highest numbers of Armed Forces children and young people (for a full list see MOD, 2021b). MODLAP's members 'work together to improve the experience and outcomes of children of UK Armed Forces families' (MOD, 2021b).

In an interview with DSC, a representative of MODLAP explained that it works with local authorities across England to educate and raise awareness of the challenges faced by Armed Forces children and young people and to share best practices. While it does not provide funding, MODLAP offers advice to local authorities' children's services on how to identify funding opportunities and submit more successful funding bids, and shares examples of best practice on how any funding they receive can be used. This guidance can be particularly important for smaller local authorities that have lower numbers of Armed Forces children and young people in their area, as these authorities may have less knowledge of potential funding sources and best practices.

In Scotland, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) is an independent professional network for leaders in education and children's services. ADES informs and influences education policy in Scotland by working in partnership with local and national governments (ADES, 2022). As noted by an interviewee, ADES has a dedicated Armed Forces lead: a full-time staff member who regularly brings together 32 Scottish local authorities to raise awareness of how councils can better support local Armed Forces families. One key strand of this work is providing advice to local authorities on how to access funding streams to support Armed Forces children and young people.

2.4.6 What role do local authorities play in the funding landscape?

Local authorities can play an important role in the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people. Local authorities may apply directly for funding (for example, to funding streams such as the AF3 Fund; see the case study in section 2.4.5) to deliver programmes and services which benefit Armed Forces children and young people, or they may serve in an advisory capacity by advising local schools or Armed Forces families on how to access funding and signposting them to other resources.

The extent to which local authorities engage with statutory funding streams to support their local Armed Forces children and young people varies significantly across different regions of the UK and may be dependent upon factors such as local population demographics (for example, the size of the local Armed Forces community), the council leadership's degree of awareness of and commitment to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and knowledge of available funding opportunities.

The total extent and value of funding to and from local authorities to support Armed Forces children and young people is unknown and lies beyond the scope of this report. However, as part of this research, DSC contacted local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland (via email correspondence and video calls) to learn more about how they help local Armed Forces children and young people access funding.

The case study below on Oxfordshire County Council provides an example of the important multifaceted support local authorities can provide.

Case study: Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire has approximately 3,000 Armed Forces children and young people, meaning that it has the fifth highest population of pupils from Armed Forces families of all English local authorities (SCiP Alliance, 2022b). This is in part because around one-quarter of Royal Air Force personnel are based in Oxfordshire, alongside high numbers of pupils with family members serving in the British Army and a smaller number of navy families. Oxfordshire is also the home of the tri-Service Defence Academy in Shrivenham, which means that a large international population of Armed Forces families have settled in the local area.

Oxfordshire County Council holds an Armed Forces Covenant gold award in recognition of its support for the local Armed Forces community. The council supports Armed Forces children and young people in both maintained state schools and academies, from early-years provision up to higher education. The Oxfordshire region has a SCiP Alliance Hub, which is chaired by a local authority representative.

In order to support local Armed Forces children and young people, Oxfordshire County Council has applied for various sources of funding. The council has recently received funding from the AF3 Fund and also successfully won funding from the Armed Forces Education Trust. This funding, combined with a small amount from the council's school improvement fund, paid for an independent consultant to co-ordinate and deliver some of the following programmes or activities alongside local authority staff:

- professional development training for school leaders of schools with Armed Forces pupils on their rolls;
- a termly newsletter with links to information and best practice;
- online termly briefings for pastoral staff and school leaders, which focus on reviewing their provision and delivering professional development training;
- network opportunities for governors of schools to upskill them, increase their awareness of their duties within the Armed Forces Covenant and review their school's Service Pupil Premium (SPP) spending;
- a Service Children's Voice event, in partnership with the charity Never Such Innocence, which saw 70 children from ten Oxfordshire schools attend a conference-like event to share their lived experiences through the arts;
- a conference at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham to help practitioners, headteachers, school governors and welfare officers meet the expectations of the Armed Forces Covenant and support the best possible outcomes for Armed Forces children and young people.

During an interview with DSC, council representatives spoke about some of the barriers to accessing funding to support Armed Forces children and young people. They explained that engaging with schools that have small numbers of Armed Forces pupils can be a challenge: for example, schools with one or two Armed Forces children and young people typically have fewer resources for training and find it difficult to release teachers to attend events, due to a lack of staff cover.

The ability of local authorities to engage with schools that have small numbers of Armed Forces children and young people is an important consideration given that, in England, approximately half of all Armed Forces children and young people attend a school where there are just one or two Armed Forces children and young people on roll (SCiP Alliance, 2019).

In order to mitigate against this issue locally, Oxfordshire County Council launched a programme called Festival of Friends. This programme is specifically aimed at engaging schools with lower numbers of Armed Forces pupils. It is creating and training a network of school leaders across four key geographic areas within the local authority. The council's consultant on this project employs a cascade model: they are training four enthusiastic school leaders, who can then serve as network leads and distribute further training and information to other schools.

Another strand of the Festival of Friends project is encouraging schools with smaller numbers of Armed Forces children and young people to use the SCiP Alliance's 'Thriving Lives Toolkit' to reflect on their practice, identify areas that could be strengthened and run modest improvement projects (SCiP Alliance, 2021).

Oxfordshire County Council representatives also expressed concerns around how the SPP is used, drawing attention to the lack of ringfencing (SPP money is intended to support school-age Armed Forces children and young people but can be used within school spending more broadly) and accountability (reporting on how the SPP is used is not required and often seen as an 'add-on').

Solutions to these issues around SPP suggested by the council's representatives include schools adopting greater transparency by publishing their SPP spending on their websites and increasing the statutory reporting requirements through school inspections and financial auditing procedures. Oxfordshire County Council is working with the National Governance Association to discuss how it can strengthen the fiscal responsibility of governors regarding SPP.

In addition, council representatives highlighted that schools with small numbers of Armed Forces children and young people might not have the same level of knowledge about the potential uses of SPP and limited options for expenditure, because SPP is a relatively small allocation of just over £300 per pupil per year. They suggested that moving to a more centralised SPP distribution system, which gives local authorities autonomy over spending, could potentially fund larger, more impactful projects. This is similar to the funding model in Wales (see the case study on Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru in section 2.4.1).

More broadly, Oxfordshire County Council representatives also noted that local availability of funding for Armed Forces children and young people across the UK is currently uneven. It is often a case of 'those who shout the loudest get support', and this often requires enthusiastic, visionary leadership at the local authority level to successfully advocate for and secure funding for Armed Forces children and young people.

Note: The majority of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from Oxfordshire County Council in addition to publicly available information.

2.5 WHAT CHALLENGES EXIST WHEN IDENTIFYING THESE FUNDERS?

2.5.1 The availability of information in the public domain

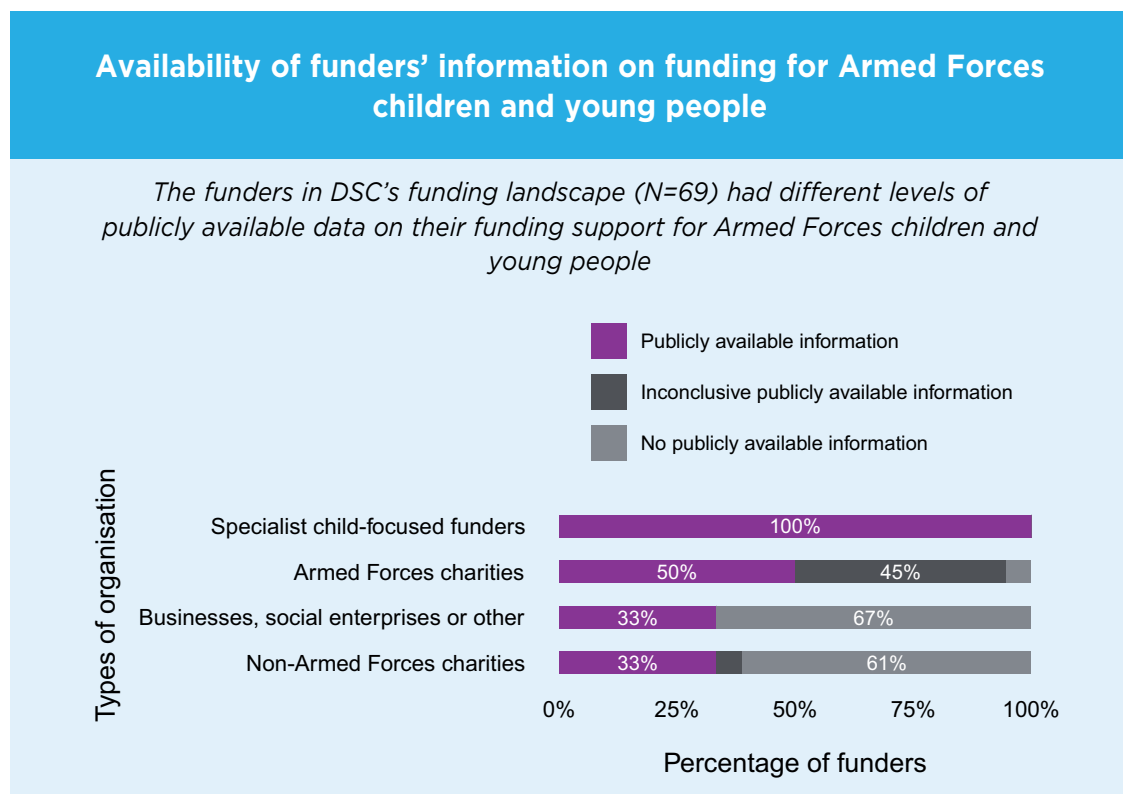
Additional analyses undertaken by DSC's researchers showed that, overall, approximately half (49.2%) of the funders identified as funding support for Armed Forces children and young people (N=69) published information that was sufficient to identify them as funding

Armed Forces children and young people on the basis of publicly available information alone. However, a more detailed breakdown of the results of this additional investigation, shown in figure 2.4 below, indicates that the public availability of evidence is notably varied between different types of funder.

As may be expected given the specialist child-focused funders' (N=7) central focus on Armed Forces children and young people, all (100%) of the specialist child-focused funders had publicly available evidence that their funding supports Armed Forces children and young people. That is, the information they published in their annual reports and accounts and/or on their websites showed that they met one or more of the criteria set out in the 'Methodology' section on page xxi.

However, among the other types of funder, it was less common for organisations to publish information that alone was sufficient to identify them as funding Armed Forces children and young people. Among the Armed Forces charities, one-half (50%) had published evidence that their funding supported Armed Forces children and young people; the corresponding figure was one-third (33.3%) among the other (non-Armed Forces) registered charities and among businesses, social enterprises and other types of organisation.

Figure 2.4



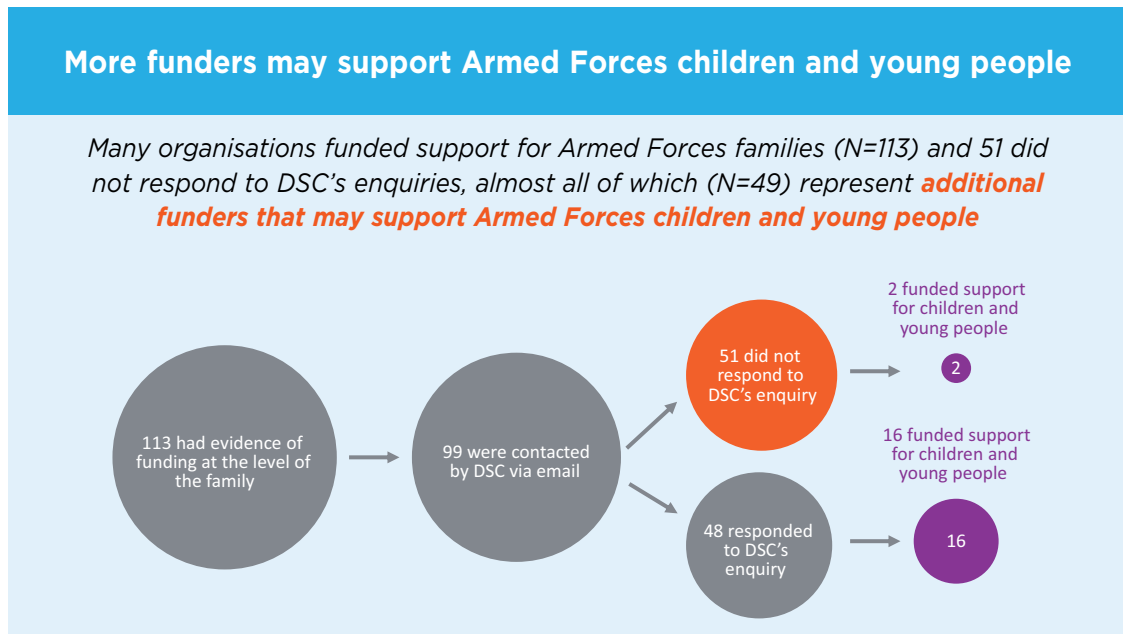
Note: Based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders' websites) collected by DSC's researchers on the funders of Armed Forces children and young people (N=69). Percentages below ten are not shown for reasons of space.

Also shown in figure 2.4 is a key distinction in the availability of inconclusive information between the Armed Forces charities and the other categories of funder. Almost half (45%) of the Armed Forces charities were identified by DSC’s researchers as having inconclusive publicly available information: these funders’ support for Armed Forces children and young people required further investigation. One important reason for this was where DSC’s researchers found evidence of funding that supports Armed Forces families but not specifically Armed Forces children and young people within the family.

In total, DSC’s researchers identified 113 organisations where there was broader evidence of funding that supports Armed Forces families. These organisations were contacted directly where they had an available email address (as described in the ‘Methodology’ section on page xxi). As shown in figure 2.5, approximately half (48.5%, N=48) responded and one-third (33.3%, N=16) of them met DSC’s criteria for evidence of funding for Armed Forces children and young people at the time of data collection; approximately half (51.5%, N=51) did not respond and any funding they may provide to support Armed Forces children and young people remains unknown (except for two that were identified through interviews with funders and stakeholders).

This analysis suggests that there are at least 49 additional funders that may support Armed Forces children and young people, but which could not be identified conclusively within this research. Assuming that the proportion of organisations that do fund support for Armed Forces children and young people is similar among the organisations that did and did not respond to DSC’s enquiry, there may be an additional 16 funders that could be engaged with in future research or practice.

Figure 2.5



Note: Based on publicly available data (published by the charity regulators or on funders’ websites) collected by DSC’s researchers. As described in the ‘Methodology’ section on page xxi, only organisations that had an email address available through their charity regulator (CCEW, CCNI or OSCRC) were contacted directly.

CHAPTER THREE

How much funding is provided?



3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide an indication of how much funding is provided to support Armed Forces children and young people. This includes funding to individuals (i.e. given directly to Armed Forces children and young people or to a parent or guardian on their behalf) and funding for organisations (i.e. given to an organisation to support Armed Forces children and young people through its services or programmes).

This chapter draws primarily on data from the Directory of Social Change (DSC)'s survey of funders to answer the following research questions:

- How do the funders report on the value of their funding to support Armed Forces children and young people?

- How much funding is provided directly to individuals?
- How much funding is provided indirectly through funding for organisations?
- Where does the funders' income originate from?
- To what extent is the funders' income sufficient?

Occasionally, data from additional desk-based research carried out by DSC's researchers is used to supplement DSC's survey. This is the case where the additional data was able to provide a more robust or complete overview of the funding landscape than was available through survey data alone. The chapter also draws on DSC's interviews with funders and stakeholders, and a series of case studies are presented to provide additional insights.

In line with the approach taken in other chapters, the survey data appears in green boxes, the interview quotes are shown in orange boxes and the case study content is identified in purple boxes.

3.2 HOW DO THE FUNDERS REPORT ON THE VALUE OF THEIR FUNDING TO SUPPORT ARMED FORCES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

This section builds on the findings discussed in the previous chapter in relation to whether funders had publicly available information relating to their funding to support Armed Forces children and young people. DSC's researchers found that funders differed substantively in how they described the value and reach of their funding to support Armed Forces children and young people, which has implications for understanding the scope of funding for this beneficiary group.

The seven specialist child-focused funders, described in section 2.4.1, provided a high level of detail in their accounts, annual reports and websites, covering how much funding they provided, to which groups of Armed Forces children and young people, and what needs they could or did address. However, a much lower level of detail was evidenced among the non-specialist funders.

Indeed, additional research showed that it is rare for information to be published on the value of grants to Armed Forces children and young people or organisations that specifically support them. DSC's researchers investigated the most recent published accounts of the 62 non-specialist funders. Of the 34 non-specialist charities that provide funding for organisations, only five (14.7%) published information on how much of their funding for organisations supported Armed Forces children and young people; these five charities all provided a list of grant recipients with a brief description of each grant's purpose and focus with respect to the intended beneficiaries. Meanwhile, of the 29 non-specialist charities that provide funding to individuals, none published information on how much of their funding to individuals supported Armed Forces children and young people (one funder provided information on a restricted funding stream, but this represented only one element of its funding for Armed Forces children and young people).

This reflects the fact that much of the information of interest to this research is not legally required when charities report on their activities to the relevant regulator(s). For example,

charities are not obligated to publish information about the beneficiary groups to which they have directed funding or the amounts and/or number of awards those groups have received. Charities that do not specialise in supporting Armed Forces children and young people may not perceive this level of information as warranting the time and resources required for collection and publication.

It is also important to note that, for the non-specialist funders, gathering and reporting on the value and/or the number of funding awards that support Armed Forces children and young people may not be feasible. This could be because these organisations do not have the capacity or systems in place to record this information, which may particularly be the case when support for Armed Forces children and young people is either a small or an irregular facet of their broader support.

To demonstrate the organisations' reporting practices in more detail, DSC's researchers excluded the specialist child-focused funders (N=7) and then drew a random sample (N=6) from the remaining non-specialist funders that were registered charities (N=56). The sample included charities with varying registration locations, Service branch affiliations and sizes.

Four of the randomly sampled charities that supported Armed Forces children and young people through funding organisations listed all grants to organisations in their latest annual return. However, detail on whether these grants were intended to support Armed Forces children and young people was not provided. Therefore, only the value of support for specialist organisations could, in principle, be evidenced. Moreover, only one of these organisations provided examples in its annual return to demonstrate the kinds of project that had been funded for Armed Forces children and young people.

The two charities in the random sample that supported Armed Forces children and young people through making grants to individuals did not report on the number or value of the grants they had awarded to Armed Forces children and young people: their publicly available information was limited to the total value of their grants to all beneficiaries, of which Armed Forces children and young people were only one part. As a result, it was not possible to ascertain how much funding had been directed to this distinct beneficiary group. Moreover, only one of the six organisations provided examples in its annual return to demonstrate how grants to individuals had been used to address Armed Forces children and young people's needs.

A key implication of these findings is that it is not possible, at present, to fully assess the overall magnitude of funding for Armed Forces children and young people, the number of Armed Forces children and young people who have been supported, or the needs that have been addressed. Improving collection and reporting on these elements of support would enable a more detailed and insightful understanding of this sector.

3.3 HOW MUCH FUNDING IS PROVIDED DIRECTLY TO INDIVIDUALS?

Because of the limitations discussed in section 3.2, DSC's researchers drew on survey data collected for this research (as described in the introduction) to assess how much funding is provided directly to individuals. DSC's survey asked all respondents whose organisations

provided funding to individuals (N=25) (i.e. funding given directly to Armed Forces children and young people or to a parent or guardian on their behalf) to estimate the total number of children or young people who received funding in a typical financial year, and the total value of that funding.

In total, 25 survey respondents reported that they made grants to individuals to support Armed Forces children and young people. However, less than half of these respondents were able to provide a figure for the number of Armed Forces children and young people who received funding in a typical year (48%, N=12) or provide an approximate total annual value of this funding (40%, N=10).

In a separate question, DSC asked the respondents about what types of data they typically recorded about their grant-making practices for Armed Forces children and young people. Approximately two-fifths (39.1%) of the respondents did not record information on the number of individual Armed Forces children and young people they funded, the value of the funding they provided to individual Armed Forces children and young people, or both.

Where respondents did not record this information, they were invited to briefly describe why, in order to help DSC's researchers to better understand charities' practices in this regard. A selection of the respondents' answers has been reproduced in box 3.1. The responses to this question primarily indicated that these charities do not differentiate between families, on the one hand, and children and young people, on the other, when funding is recorded. In these cases, children and young people received funding as part of a wider package of support to the family.

Box 3.1

Respondents' explanations for limitations to how they recorded data related to Armed Forces children and young people

Our individual funding is to dependent families, which may or may not include children and young people. If it does, the division of the grants per capita is not normally considered.

We do not collate specific data for Armed Forces children and young people but rather the number of families supported.

We record by regimental beneficiaries - i.e. Service personnel (serving and veterans) and their dependents - which may include funding for children or young people. In 2021 we funded 505 individual applications.

Survey respondents

As shown in table 3.1, the survey respondents who reported a figure (N=12) cumulatively provided funding to 8,590 Armed Forces children and young people in a typical year. The minimum number of individuals funded by a single organisation in the survey was two and the maximum number was 5,000.

The total annual value of the funding given to individuals in a typical year was approximately £3.1 million, based on ten responses to this question. The minimum amount of funding given to individuals provided by an organisation was £1,500 and the maximum was £2 million. As a conservative estimate - based on 28.6% of the funders identified that provide funding to individuals (N=35, see section 4.2) - this £3.1 million could be interpreted as the minimum amount of funding provided to individuals to support Armed Forces children and young people in a typical year.

The respondents were also asked to provide the minimum and maximum levels of funding they typically provided through grants or other funding to individuals. The minimum size of a grant or other funding package to a single Armed Forces child or young person ranged from £100 to £1,000 and was, on average, £375 (N=8 respondents). Meanwhile, the maximum size of a grant that respondents provided to a single Armed Forces child or young person ranged from £1,500 to £30,000 and was, on average, £3,500 (N=8 respondents).

Table 3.1

Scope of funding to individual Armed Forces children and young people			
		Range of values among survey respondents	
	Total	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Number of individuals funded	8,590	2	5,000
Total value of funding provided to individuals	£3.1 million	£1,500	£2 million
Lowest value of a single funding package	-	£100	£1,000
Highest value of a single funding package	-	£1,500	£30,000

Note: Based on data from a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 respondents (out of 25 who indicated that their organisation supported Armed Forces children and young people through funding to individuals).

3.4 HOW MUCH FUNDING IS PROVIDED INDIRECTLY THROUGH FUNDING FOR ORGANISATIONS?

3.4.1 Funding for organisations from organisations

Because of the limitations discussed in section 3.2, DSC's researchers drew on survey data collected for this research (as described in the introduction) to assess how much funding is provided through funding for organisations. DSC's survey asked all respondents whose organisation provided funding for other organisations (N=28) (i.e. money given to an organisation to support Armed Forces children and young people through its services or programmes) to estimate the total number of children or young people who received funding in a typical financial year, and the total value of that funding.

In total, 28 respondents funded organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people. Yet only around two-thirds (67.9%, N=19) were able to provide a figure for the number of organisations they funded or the value of funding provided to organisations (64.3%, N=18) in a typical year.

In a separate question, DSC's survey further found that just over one-quarter (26.9%) of the respondents did not routinely collect one or more of the pieces of information needed to understand the scope of the funding given to organisations that support Armed Forces children and young people (i.e. the value of funding for organisations, the number of funding awards made or both).

As shown in table 3.2, the survey respondents who provided a figure (N=19) funded 563 organisations in a typical year in order to support Armed Forces children and young people. The minimum number of organisations funded by a single respondent was one and the maximum number of organisations funded by a single respondent was 400.

The total value of the funding respondents gave to these organisations in a typical year was approximately £5.5 million (based on 18 responses), with the minimum amount of funding provided by a single organisation being £10,000 and the maximum being £3 million. As a conservative estimate – based on 37.5% of the funders identified that provide funding for organisations (N=48, see section 4.3) – this £5.5 million could be interpreted as the minimum amount of funding provided for organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people in a typical year.

The respondents were also asked to provide the minimum and maximum levels of funding they typically provided for organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people. The minimum size of a funding package provided to a single organisation ranged from £300 to £52,000 and was, on average, £3,500 (N=11 respondents). Meanwhile, the maximum size of a funding package provided to a single organisation ranged from £5,000 to £720,000 and was, on average, £30,000 (N=11 respondents).

Table 3.2

Scope of funding for organisations			
	Total	Range of values among survey respondents	
		<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Number of organisations funded	563	1	400
Total value of funding provided to organisations	£5.5 million	£10,000	£3 million
Lowest value of a single funding package	-	£300	£52,000
Highest value of a single funding package	-	£5,000	£720,000

Note: Based on data from a minimum of 11 and a maximum of 18 respondents (out of 28 who indicated that their charity supported Armed Forces children and young people through funding for organisations).

3.4.2 Funding for organisations from statutory bodies

As detailed in section 2.4.5, funding is also provided by the UK government and devolved administrations. This funding is directed to organisations, such as schools and local authorities, to be subsequently spent on providing support for Armed Forces children and young people, within a specified remit.

DSC's researchers identified two statutory funding streams that are specifically focused on funding support for Armed Forces children and young people. The Service Pupil Premium (SPP; see the first case study in section 2.4.5) is awarded directly to eligible schools in England to help them provide pastoral support and, in 2020/21, provided £25 million (Roberts et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the AF3 Fund (formerly the Education Support Fund; see the second case study in section 2.4.5) is available for eligible schools, groups of schools and local authorities to provide additional services not covered by the SPP. During 2023, the AF3 Fund will distribute £3 million to schools (RAF Families Federation, 2022).

Beyond the SPP and the AF3, there are methodological barriers to assessing the scope of funding from statutory bodies for organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people. This is because other statutory funding streams are not focused solely on Armed Forces children and young people. For example, the Scottish government incorporates support for Armed Forces children and young people within its Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) model and the Additional Support for Learning Act (2004) – and the Scottish government does not publish data on how much of this funding is directed to Armed Forces children and young people. In addition, local authorities can take individual approaches to fund support for Armed Forces children and young people. While it was beyond the scope of this research, future work may consider the use of freedom of

information requests to overcome these methodological barriers and develop further insights about the value of statutory funding streams for Armed Forces children and young people.

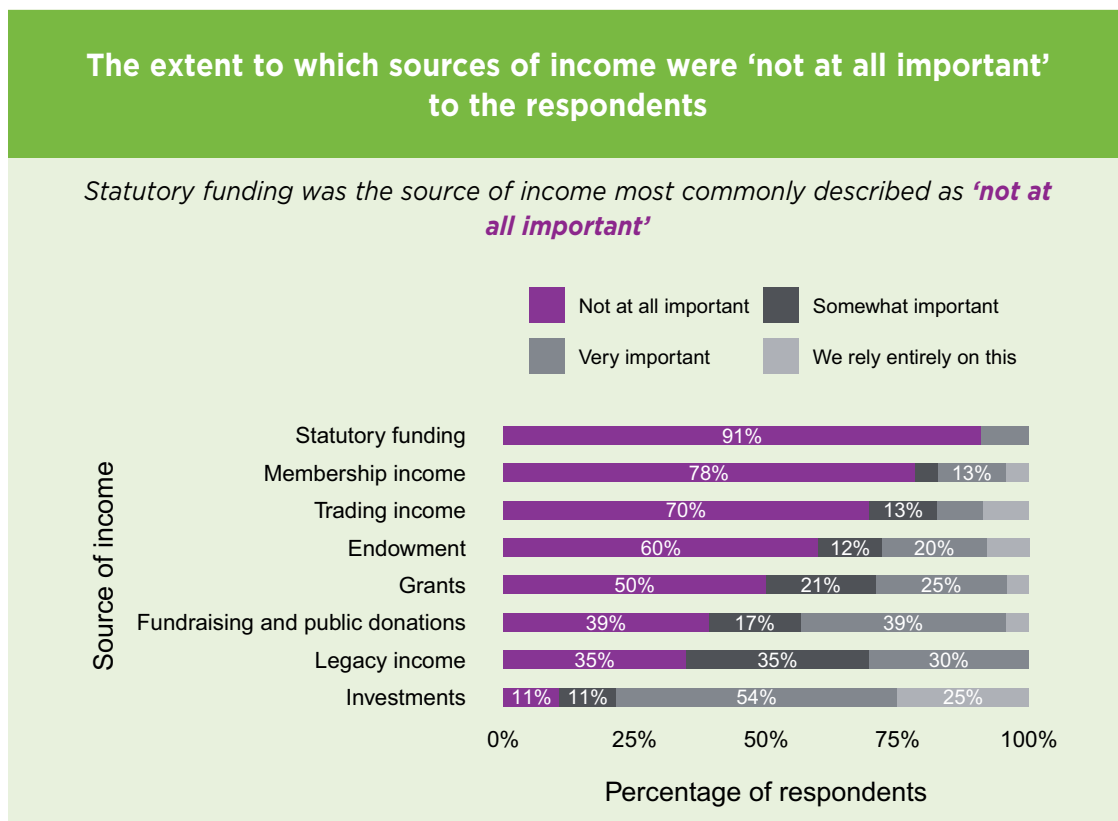
3.5 WHERE DOES THE FUNDERS' INCOME ORIGINATE FROM?

3.5.1 The relative importance of different sources of income

DSC's survey asked the respondents how important different sources of income were to their organisation. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 present the same data in two different ways, ranking the sources of income by those that were most widely reported to be less important and those that were most commonly reported to be more important, respectively.

Turning first to the sources of income that the organisations in DSC's survey most widely reported to be 'not at all important' (figure 3.1), the overwhelming majority (91%) of the responding organisations placed statutory funding in this category. This was followed by over three-quarters (78%) reporting that membership income was not at all important, and more than two-thirds (70%) reporting that trading income was not at all important.

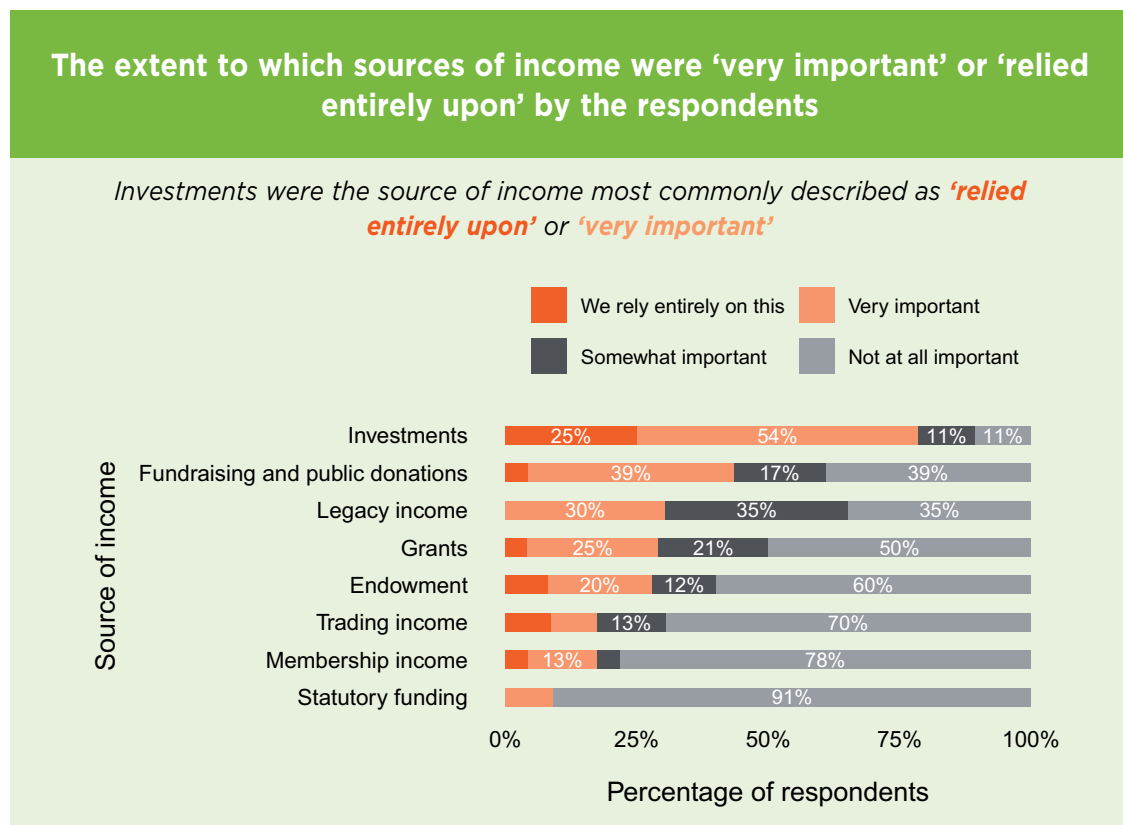
Figure 3.1



Note: There were a minimum of 22 and a maximum of 28 responses to the multiple parts of this question. Percentages below ten are not shown for reasons of space.

In contrast, as shown in figure 3.2, the income sources which the survey respondents identified as being very important or entirely relied upon were most frequently investments (25% of the respondents relied entirely on this and 54% said it was very important), fundraising and public donations (4.3% of the respondents relied entirely on this and 39% said it was very important), and legacy income (30% of the respondents said this was very important).

Figure 3.2



Note: There were a minimum of 22 and a maximum of 28 responses to the multiple parts of this question. Percentages below ten are not shown for reasons of space.

3.6 TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE FUNDERS’ INCOME SUFFICIENT?

The respondents to DSC’s survey were asked to what extent their organisation’s income was sufficient to enable them to deliver a level of funding that met their objectives in relation to support for Armed Forces children and young people. A range of the respondents’ answers have been reproduced in box 3.2.

Almost all of those who responded stated that their organisation's income was adequate or sufficient. Moreover, some of the respondents stated that their organisation could, or intended to, increase its support due to its income being more than sufficient or flexible enough to respond to changing needs. On the other hand, one of the respondents drew attention to recent changes in the socio-economic landscape that had affected their ability to meet the demand from potential recipients of funding.

Box 3.2

Respondents' comments on the sufficiency of their organisation's income to meet objectives in relation to Armed Forces children and young people

We have sufficient funds at this moment in time.

Currently sufficient but stretched to achieve all our aspirations.

Definitely sufficient, and investments mean we can increase support if need be.

We always have sufficient funds to deliver the activities required and are actually looking to support more in the future.

We are seeing a significant increase in the value of grant requests reflecting financial hardship and funding pressures on our partners – this, in turn, is increasing the financial challenge on the charity's reserve funds.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

During the interviews conducted as part of this research, three interviewees drew attention to increased demand for crisis funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and, more recently, increases in the cost of living. Extracts from these interviews have been reproduced in box 3.3.

Box 3.3

Interviewees' comments on changing funding strategies in response to COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis

At the moment we are seeing a big shift to cost-of-living requests from RAF stations ... We've seen a shift to the use of food banks by Service personnel, which hasn't happened for quite a long time, and we're seeing more requests from households with children around day-to-day living costs.

We now do more broader crisis funding. [Our] budget has swung from funding education to funding more holistic child needs and also community-based work.

Crisis intervention and family support is an area that continues to grow. I think, particularly just now in the economic climate, we are seeing more people reaching out and requiring that support from us. We are continuing to look at ways that we can help those families at an earlier point than coming to us in crisis.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

It is important to note that DSC's other research suggests the rising cost of living in late 2022 is starting to have an impact on the Armed Forces community and on the Armed Forces charities supporting it. Charities are seeing widespread increases in demand for support alongside increases in expenditure, which has had an impact on the sufficiency of income to meet demand (Howarth and Cole, 2023). This reflects the findings from a large sample of charity and voluntary sector organisations more broadly (Jemal et al., 2022). It would therefore be interesting to revisit this topic through additional research in the future. This would provide an opportunity to assess how increases in the cost of living – which may be confronting Armed Forces families as well as funders themselves – may affect whether funders' income is sufficient to meet the needs of Armed Forces children and young people.

In addition to there having been changes in the level of demand, there have been changes in the provision of funding, as the case study below shows. This case study focuses on a major grant-making charity, the Royal British Legion. It highlights the substantial changes in demand that have been faced by charities providing funding for Armed Forces children and young people, particularly through grants to individuals.

Case study: The Royal British Legion

The Royal British Legion (RBL) is the UK's largest Armed Forces charity and has been providing lifelong support to serving and ex-Service personnel for over 100 years (RBL, 2022a). As part of its broad programme of funding for the Armed Forces community, the charity provides funding support for Armed Forces children and young people by making grants to both individuals and organisations.

In terms of grants for organisations, RBL has recently funded Never Such Innocence, a charity that provides activities – such as a choir and creative school workshops – for Armed Forces children and young people. While RBL currently awards targeted grant funding to select organisations, in the future it hopes to develop an open application process for funding for organisations.

In terms of its funding to individuals, RBL has a £500,000 annual grant fund which is specifically restricted to supporting Armed Forces children and young people. This pot of funding is generated by one of RBL's branches, called the Women's Section – an autonomous, self-funding branch first established in 1921 (RBL, 2022b).

In an interview with DSC, RBL described examples of what has been funded by this restricted fund, which included furniture for children's and young people's bedrooms, school uniforms and other clothing, Christmas gifts and school trips. It has also been used to provide educational scholarships towards university living costs and to help children and young people with additional needs access specialist schooling. The range of funding that RBL can provide from this earmarked pot is quite flexible, which enables the charity to respond broadly to children's and young people's needs.

RBL plays a central role in the almonisation process (see section 7.8). In addition to the charity receiving grant requests through its own digital case-working system, RBL's dedicated case-working team receives requests and records data through Cobseo's (the Confederation of Service Charities) Mosaic case-working system, which enables funding needs to be met by a number of Armed Forces charities.

This position in the grant-making process better enables RBL to respond to the needs of children and young people that arise within its own case-working system or through those of its partners. For example, if a case flagged as being specifically related to the needs of a child comes through the Mosaic casework system, RBL will typically make a grant from its restricted pot for Armed Forces children and young people.

When individuals apply for help through the case-working system, personal details are captured from the lead applicant, who is typically the parent or carer. The charity makes a conscious effort to gather minimal personal data on children.

Typically, this is only gathered in instances where this data is extremely necessary – for example, when a child is applying as the lead applicant for a scholarship.

Because of this approach to data recording, it is not currently possible to calculate how many Armed Forces children and young people are specifically supported through RBL’s wider grant-giving to families. This reflects one of the key findings of this report (see section 6.2). However, RBL estimates that it awards approximately £1.5 million to families annually.

RBL has seen a dramatic rise in demand for funding from families in response to COVID-19 and increases in the cost of living. For instance, applications for RBL’s crisis grants have increased by 70% since the pandemic began. It has recently launched a cost-of-living grants programme, which covers essentials such as energy bills, food, clothing and furniture.

When asked about the future of RBL’s grant-making in an interview with DSC, RBL’s representative said that they expected the charity’s response to the cost-of-living crisis to more than double the level of grant funding it previously provided to individuals.

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the Royal British Legion in addition to publicly available information.

CHAPTER FOUR

Who can be funded?



4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide an overview of who can receive funding in the context of support for Armed Forces children and young people. This includes the distinction between organisations and individuals as recipients, and the characteristics of the Armed Forces children and young people who are eligible to be supported through funding.

This chapter draws primarily on data from the Directory of Social Change (DSC)'s survey of funders to answer the following research questions:

- What is the extent of funding directly to individuals versus that provided indirectly through organisations?

- What types of organisation are funded?
- What eligibility criteria do funders have?

Occasionally, data from additional desk-based research carried out by DSC's researchers is used to supplement DSC's survey. This is the case where the additional data was able to provide a more robust or complete overview of the funding landscape than was available through survey data alone. The chapter also draws on DSC's interviews with funders and stakeholders, and a series of case studies are presented to provide additional insights.

In line with the approach taken in other chapters, the desk research is presented in blue boxes, the survey data appears in green boxes, the interview quotes are shown in orange boxes and the case study content is identified in purple boxes.

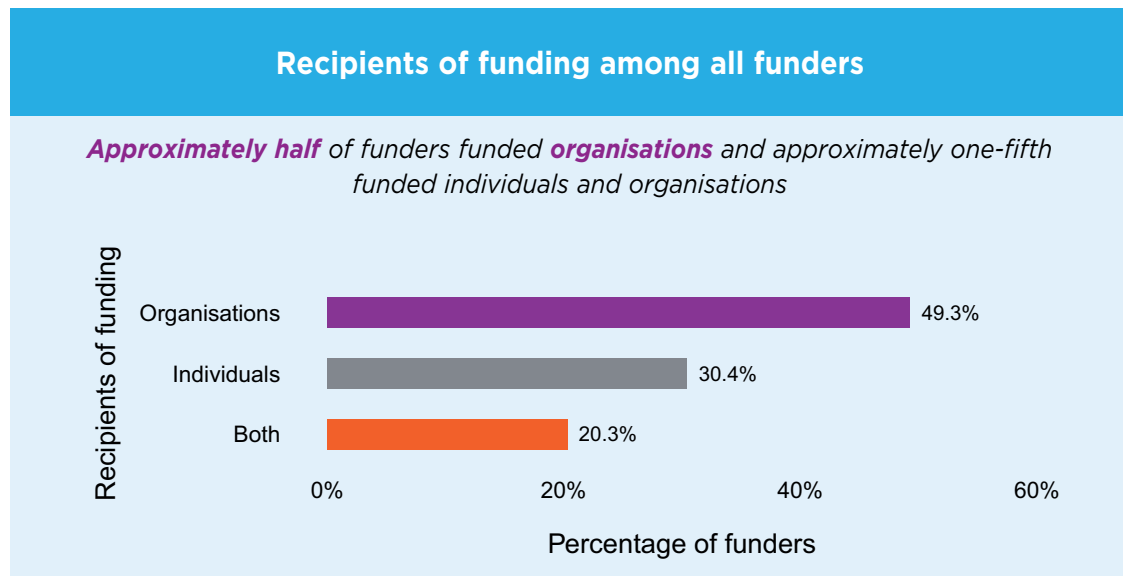
4.2 WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF FUNDING PROVIDED DIRECTLY TO INDIVIDUALS VERSUS THAT PROVIDED INDIRECTLY THROUGH ORGANISATIONS?

In the context of this report, funding to individuals refers to funds given directly to Armed Forces children and young people, including to a parent or carer on behalf of a child or young person. Meanwhile, funding for organisations refers to money given to an organisation to support Armed Forces children and young people through its services or programmes.

To compare the extent of funding to individuals versus organisations, DSC's researchers used a combination of survey data and publicly available information: where survey data was unavailable, information was collated from accounts, annual reports and websites to determine whether the funder provided funding to individuals, organisations or both in order to support Armed Forces children and young people. Researchers relied on this approach because the information required was consistently publicly available and therefore provided a more complete picture of the funding landscape when compared with using the survey responses alone.

As shown in figure 4.1, just under half (49.3%) of all organisations in DSC's funding landscape provided funding for organisations, just under a third (30.4%) provided funding directly to individuals, and one fifth (20.3%) provided funding to both organisations and individuals.

Figure 4.1



Note: Percentages were calculated out of all organisations identified by DSC as being part of the funding landscape (N=69).

4.3 WHAT TYPES OF ORGANISATION ARE FUNDED?

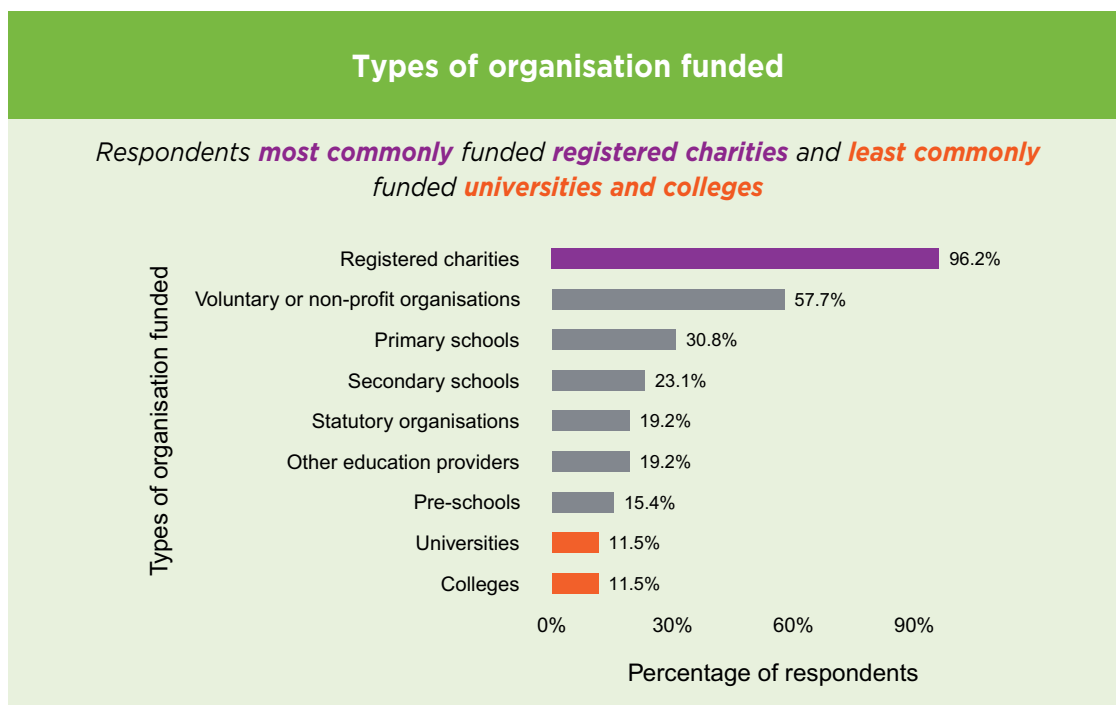
Overall, 28 survey respondents reported that they provided funding for organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people (this includes respondents that solely funded organisations and those that funded a mixture of organisations and individuals).

These respondents were asked to indicate the types of organisation that they funded. It is important to highlight that, distinct from section 4.4 (on eligibility), respondents were here asked about what they *do* fund in practice, as opposed to what their charitable objects *allow* them to fund.

As shown in figure 4.2, almost all (96.2%) of the survey respondents reported that they provided funding to registered charities. Moreover, more than half (57.7%) provided funding to voluntary or non-profit organisations.

Overall, more than one-third (38.5%; not shown in figure 4.2) of the respondents provided funding to at least one of the educational institutions listed in DSC's survey, which ranged from pre-school through to university. However, there were notable differences between these settings: while 30.8% funded primary schools and 23.1% funded secondary schools, only around one-tenth (11.5%) of the respondents provided funding to universities or colleges.

Figure 4.2



Note: There were 26 responses to this question (not including those reporting an ‘other’ answer). Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

A small number of the respondents funded other types of organisation that were not listed within the survey. Most of the responses in this regard related to funding support for military units or regiments. Some example responses have been reproduced in box 4.1.

Box 4.1

Respondents’ comments on other types of organisation funded

Individual Armed Forces bases.

Royal Navy and Royal Marine units and ships.

Support to regiments’ battalions, both regular and Reserves.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

As mentioned above, a significant proportion of survey respondents provided funding to primary schools. As recipients – as opposed to providers – of funding, schools were not invited to participate in DSC’s survey. However, DSC’s researchers contacted two primary schools in receipt of funding from both statutory bodies and charities to better understand how they use this funding to help their Armed Forces pupils and gain insights into the schools’ perceptions of the barriers and enablers they face in accessing funding. The case studies below provide an overview of each primary school’s approach to accessing and using funding for Armed Forces children and young people.

Case study: Priory Church in Wales Primary School

Priory Church in Wales (CiW) Primary is a primary school in Brecon – home to the largest British Army barracks in Wales and, therefore, to many Armed Forces families (House of Commons Library, 2022). As of November 2022, the school reported that it had 16 Armed Forces children in attendance from 14 families.

Priory CiW Primary receives funding from both the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru to provide resources to help support the Armed Forces children who attend the school. In previous years, SSCE Cymru grants have helped to provide an Armed Forces families support officer at the school and provide school staff with training and resources to facilitate emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) sessions for Armed Forces children and young people within the school.

Funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has helped the school to provide a community garden and adventure playground equipment. The school reports that this has had a positive impact on the Armed Forces pupils’ health and wellbeing: to gather feedback on the success of funded projects, the school uses questionnaires and listens directly to the voices of pupils and their parents through the school council and social media pages.

All grant-funded projects that the school applies for aim to support the holistic development of the Armed Forces children who attend the school. The grant application process is led by the voices of Priory CiW Primary’s Armed Forces pupils and their families – the teaching staff carry out parental consultations and have an open-door policy to enable them to gather feedback from parents.

Within the wider school environment, teaching staff ensure that other children are aware of the needs of Armed Forces pupils as a distinct group of learners. All Armed Forces pupils have access to ELSA and academic interventions if they should require it.

DSC asked the school’s teaching staff to share some insights into the barriers they face when accessing funding for their pupils from Armed Forces families. The teachers reported that sustaining projects was challenging, explaining that they rely on funding from the Welsh equivalents to the Service Pupil Premium in

England to maintain their current projects that support Armed Forces children and young people.¹

Conversely, when asked what could help to improve the school's access to funding to support Armed Forces children and young people, the teaching staff highlighted that, based on their experience, the use of interview panels could offer better opportunities than online application forms: while online application forms have their strengths, panels can help applicants to better describe their project and discuss how they are evaluating the success of their funding.

Note: The majority of information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives of Priory Primary School in addition to publicly available information.

Case study: Alexander First School

Alexander First School is a primary school in Berkshire, South East England. It takes its name from Field Marshal Harold Alexander, 1st Earl Alexander of Tunis, whose wife opened the school after it was built in 1972 (Alexander First School, 2022).

The majority (approximately three-quarters) of the school's pupils are from Armed Forces families. The school has a variety of support mechanisms in place for these pupils. These include books on the social and emotional factors related to being an Armed Forces child, therapy sessions (in sports, music and art) to support children who are moving or joining the school, and planned opportunities to revisit learning for pupils who have gaps in their learning (as noted in chapter 1, this can result from family mobility).

To specifically help the school support its Armed Forces children, it has received funding from both statutory and charitable organisations. In particular, it has received funding from the Service Pupil Premium, the Education Support Fund from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) (now the AF3 Fund) and the Armed Forces Education Trust (AFET) (see the two case studies in section 2.4.5 and the case study in section 5.4.1, respectively).

Funding from the Education Support Fund helped the school to sustain support around social and emotional wellbeing (such as play therapy, music therapy, art therapy, and mental health support for parents and pupils) and education-focused interventions (such as additional teachers for new Armed Forces pupils who are well below their age-related expectations, and phonics and reading support for Armed Forces pupils who are at risk of falling behind).

Through its funding from AFET, Alexander First School has been able to provide educational interventions for Armed Forces children, including teaching for small

¹ The Welsh equivalents to the Service Pupil Premium in England are the Pupil Development Grant (previously the Pupil Deprivation Grant) and Early Years Pupil Development Grant (previously the Early Years Pupil Deprivation Grant) and are 'intended to overcome the additional barriers that prevent learners from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving their full potential' (Welsh government, 2015, p. 3).

groups of children who have joined the school with gaps in their learning and one-to-one support for children who have joined the school with additional needs but do not have an existing Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. In addition, AFET's funding has helped to provide various therapeutic interventions and a 'Service children's champion' to offer additional pastoral support.

Overall, the school reports that funding for Armed Forces children has had a positive effect on pupils and parents. Such funding has fostered children's educational progress, helped pupils at risk of exclusion to stay in school and remain in mainstream settings, encouraged parents to become more involved in their children's schooling and education, and improved behaviour and attendance.

When asked about the application process for accessing funding for Armed Forces children, Alexander First School's representative highlighted that when application forms allow the school to communicate its specific context and circumstances, it tends to be more successful in seeking funding. For example, this includes being able to express how the intake of Armed Forces children 'significantly impacts [the school's] budget and financial situation, given the restrictive nature of current government funding formulas'.

The representative also drew attention to some challenges associated with the various funding streams. A key challenge for the school is consistency: funding from the sources outlined above has helped the school to meet the needs of Armed Forces children beyond what would be possible with central (i.e. local authority) funding - but these grants often cannot be repeated across years. Moreover, the amount of grant funding received can vary significantly from year to year, leading to uncertainty around the school's ability to continue providing support.

One further challenge described by Alexander First School's representative is the attachment of grants to specific pupils within the school. As a result of this funding condition, money is withdrawn when pupils move. This is a significant challenge because the school experiences a high rate of mobility among Armed Forces children. There have been instances when the provision of support has already been put in place - for example, recruiting additional staff or purchasing new resources - and the withdrawal of support has led to a loss of income and increased debt for the school.

Note: The majority of information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives of Alexander First School in addition to publicly available information.

4.4 WHAT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA DO FUNDERS HAVE?

To better understand the characteristics of the Armed Forces children and young people that the respondents to DSC's survey could support (via funding to individuals, organisations or both), DSC asked funders about their organisation's eligibility criteria. When considering

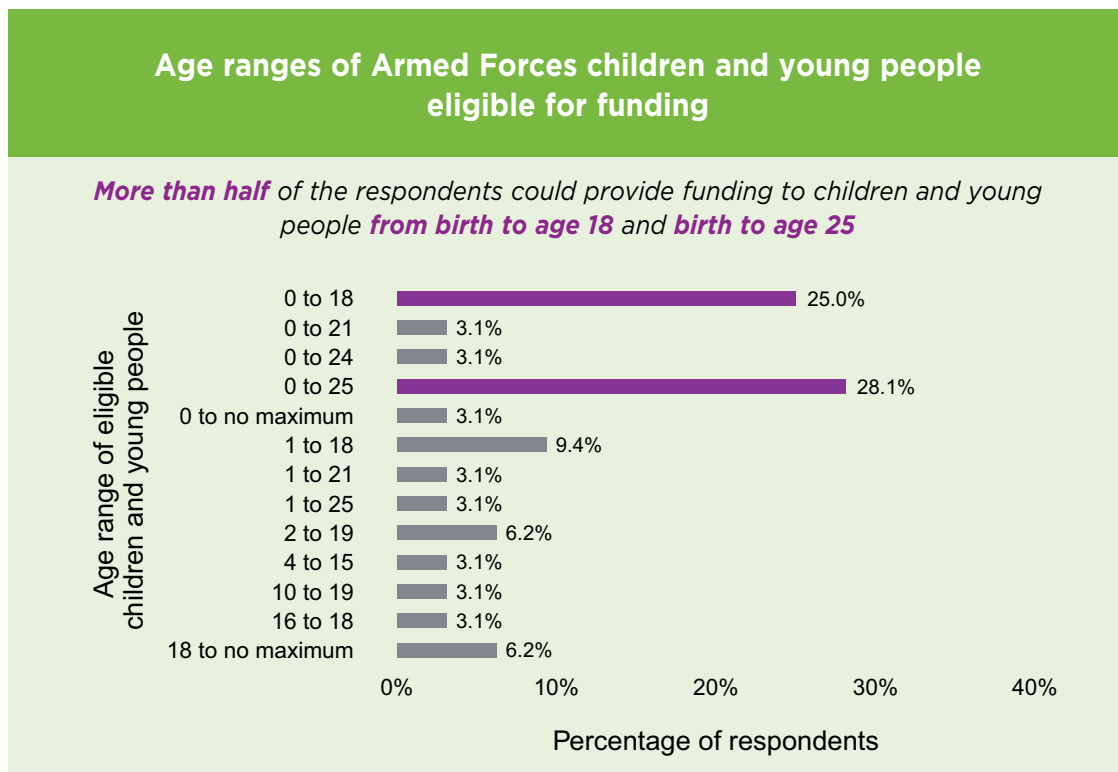
the characteristics of the Armed Forces children and young people supported, eligibility was the focus of this survey because it has the potential to be broader than the Armed Forces children and young people that the respondents currently or typically did support at the time of the survey.

4.4.1 Age of children and young people

Turning first to the ages at which the respondents said they could provide funding to support Armed Forces children and young people, as shown in figure 4.3, the respondents most commonly could provide funding from birth up to age 25 (28.1%). This group was followed closely by those that said they could provide support from birth to age 18 (25%). A variety of other, unique age ranges were specified in the survey responses, but it was rare for respondents to include no restrictions on the age of eligible Armed Forces children and young people.

As discussed in more detail in section 4.4.5, some interviewees reported that their organisation could adopt a flexible approach to age-based eligibility criteria in instances where its beneficiaries exceeded the organisation’s typical age range but had limited independence or learning difficulties.

Figure 4.3



Note: There were 32 responses to this question. The respondents that provided a minimum age but did not provide a maximum age (N=3) have been treated as having 'no maximum' age limit.

4.4.2 Service status

Turning to the Service status of eligible Armed Forces children and young people, respondents were asked to indicate whether they supported Armed Forces children and young people from serving families, from ex-Service families or from both. Almost all of the respondents (96.8%) supported Armed Forces children and young people from both serving and ex-Service families. The remaining respondents (3.2%) supported Armed Forces children and young people in serving families only. None of the respondents supported Armed Forces children and young people in ex-Service families only.

This finding is markedly different from what has been found in DSC's broader research with Armed Forces charities that support families. DSC's 2021 *Focus on Families* report found that only 62.3% of its survey respondents supported serving *and* ex-Service families – significantly less than the 96.8% revealed by the current report (Howarth et al., 2021). This suggests that, where the focus is specifically on funding for Armed Forces children and young people, eligibility with respect to the families' Service status is much more broad.

4.4.3 Service branch

With respect to Service branch, DSC's researchers used a combination of survey data and publicly available information: where survey data was unavailable, information was collated from accounts, annual reports and websites to determine whether the funder could provide funding that supports Armed Forces children in Royal Navy and Royal Marines families, British Army families, Royal Air Force families, or any type of Armed Forces family (tri-Service). Researchers relied on this approach because the information required was already available for the charities in DSC's Armed Forces charities database and could be reasonably inferred from funders' annual reports and accounts and/or their websites. This approach, therefore, provided a more complete picture of the funding landscape when compared with using the survey responses alone.

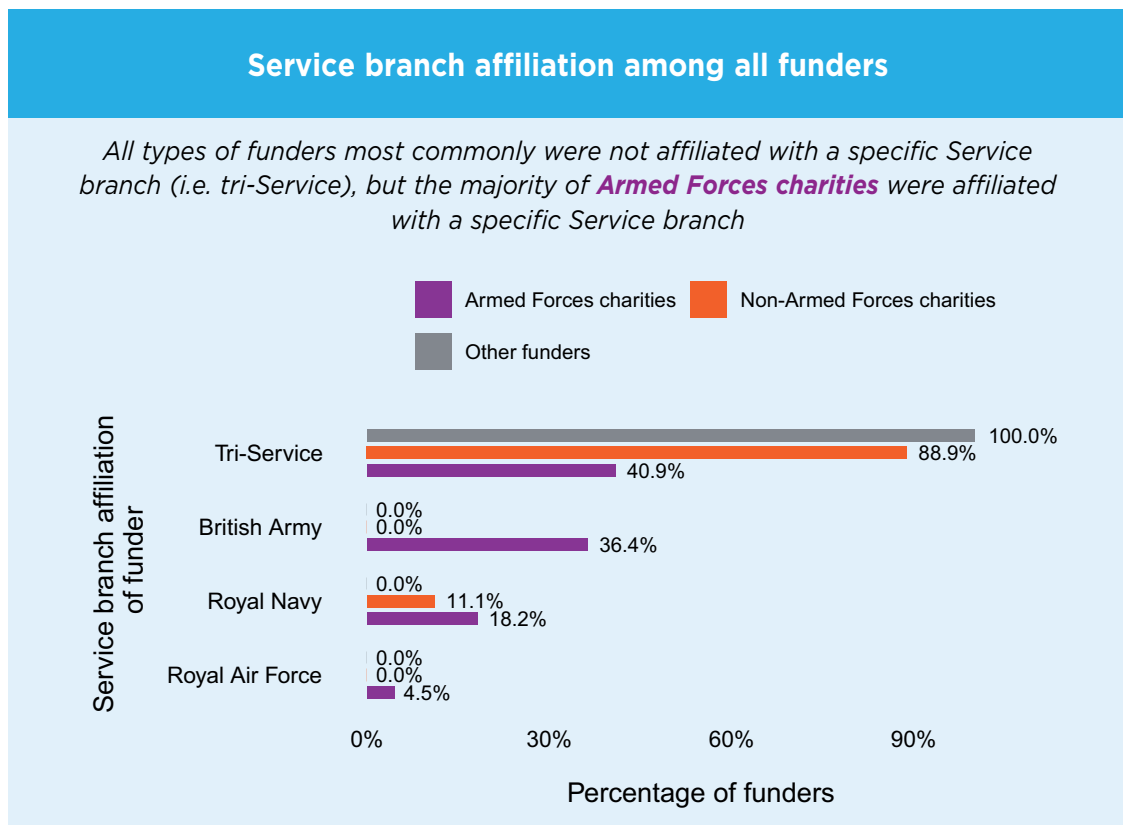
As shown in figure 4.4, among the Armed Forces charities, approximately two-fifths (40.9%) of funders could support children and young people from any Service branch (i.e. tri-Service). Meanwhile, just over one-third (36.4%) of the funders could support children and young people from British Army families only, just under one-fifth (18.2%) could support children and young people from Royal Navy or Royal Marines families only, and a small minority (4.5%) could support children and young people from Royal Air Force families only.

Among non-Armed Forces charities (i.e. registered charities that have more general charitable purposes beyond supporting the Armed Forces community), the overwhelming majority (88.9%) were identified as being able to support children and young people from any Service branch (i.e. tri-Service). This is unsurprising given that charities beyond the

Armed Forces charity sector are unlikely to have such specificity in relation to which branches of the Armed Forces they can support. The two exceptions had charitable objectives focused on support for seafarers: accordingly, 11.1% of the non-Armed Forces charities in DSC’s funding landscape supported Armed Forces children and young people from Royal Navy or Royal Marines families only.

Finally, among other funders, all funders (100%) were identified as being able to support children and young people from any Service branch (i.e. tri-Service).

Figure 4.4



Note: Percentages were calculated out of all organisations identified by DSC as being part of the funding landscape within Armed Forces charities (N=44), non-Armed Forces charities (N=18) and other funders (N=7).

The case study below provides an example of an Armed Forces charity affiliated with a particular Service branch, in this case the British Army, that provides support to Armed Forces children and young people.

Case study: Army Central Fund

The Army Central Fund is a registered charity dating back to 1947, when ‘welfare funds were combined as a registered charity with trustees appointed from the Army’ (Army Central Fund, 2019). The purpose of the Army Central Fund remains to ‘improve the welfare of serving British Army personnel and their families’ and it works towards this goal by making grants mainly to British Army units and charities (Army Central Fund, 2022).

Using income primarily from capital investment, the Army Central Fund supports Armed Forces children and young people indirectly – that is, by making grants to organisations. Over the three most recent financial years (ending 2020 to 2022), the fund dedicated more than £750,000 to funding organisations to undertake projects that specifically supported Armed Forces children and young people.

The Army Central Fund awards grants to a range of charities to support Armed Forces children and young people. These include charities that are specific to the Armed Forces community (such as the Army Families Federation, Reading Force and SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity) as well as those that operate more broadly (such as the Boleh Trust, Home-Start UK and the NSPCC). Grants can be awarded to projects that benefit the whole community or to projects that support those in need, such as families with a child with a disability or additional needs.

Alongside funding for charities, the Army Central Fund also supports British Army units in the UK and overseas (e.g. in Brunei and Cyprus). This includes improving facilities and providing activities for children on the base. Recently, the fund provided funding to a school in Windsor with a very high proportion of children from British Army families to help develop a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) learning centre.

Note: The majority of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the Army Central Fund in addition to publicly available information.

4.4.4 Geographical location

Turning now to the location of eligible Armed Forces children and young people, the survey respondents could, overall, provide support relatively evenly throughout the UK. In addition, just over half (53.3%) of the survey respondents could provide funding to support Armed Forces children and young people outside the UK.

Looking at each region of the UK in isolation, most of the survey respondents could support the Armed Forces children and young people living there. While there was little variation between the regions, a marginally higher percentage of the survey respondents could provide funding to support Armed Forces children and young people living in the south of England compared to the north of England. Specifically, the regions funded by the highest percentages of the survey respondents were Wales, South East England, London, East of England and South West England (83.3% for each region). Meanwhile, funding to children and young people living in the Midlands and northern England regions could be provided by 80% of the survey respondents (for each region).

The relatively consistent eligibility for each region of the UK described above was driven largely by the fact that, when looking at the combinations of regions – as opposed to looking at each region in isolation – in which the respondents could provide support, just over two-thirds (70%) of the respondents to this question could fund Armed Forces children and young people anywhere in the UK. The remaining respondents (30%, not shown in table 4.1) selected specific regions, or combinations of regions, in which they could fund Armed Forces children and young people. The combinations of different regions that the respondents selected can be seen in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1

Combinations of eligible geographical locations in the UK selected by the respondents	
Region(s) selected by the respondents	Percentage of respondents
Anywhere in the UK	70%
Anywhere in England, Wales and Scotland	3.3%
Anywhere in England and Wales	3.3%
Anywhere in England	3.3%
Anywhere in Scotland	3.3%
Anywhere in Wales	3.3%
East of England and South West England	3.3%
London	3.3%
South East England and Wales	3.3%
South East England	3.3%

Note: There were 30 responses to this question (not including those reporting an ‘other’ answer). The percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

As outlined in the case study below, Forces Children Scotland provides an example of a regional specialist funder, in this case serving Armed Forces children and young people in Scotland and those with a strong family connection to Scotland.

Case study: Forces Children Scotland

Forces Children Scotland (the operating name of the Royal Caledonian Education Trust) has been supporting Armed Forces children and young people for over 200 years. The charity was founded in 1815 to support Scottish children and young people whose parents had been killed or experienced life-changing wounds during the Napoleonic Wars. It originally served as a boarding school, becoming a grant-making charity in 1995.

Today, Forces Children Scotland aims to help children and young people from Armed Forces families throughout Scotland to realise their potential and thrive (Forces Children Scotland, 2022b). The charity supports Armed Forces children and young people in many ways – for example, by delivering youth-focused programmes which concentrate on participation and coproduction work, mental health and wellbeing. The charity provides training, resources, and an advisory service for schools and families. This intends to help people supporting Armed Forces children and young people to understand the challenges children and young people face. It also carries out campaigns and policy work to amplify the voices and lived experiences of Armed Forces children and young people and invoke change in policy and legislation.

Forces Children Scotland provides financial support through a range of grant-giving funds to help serving, reservist and veteran families to overcome financial challenges. In 2021/22, the charity awarded £105,059 in grants for the direct benefit of children and young people in Armed Forces families.

All Armed Forces children and young people up to the age of 24 – and who have a Scottish connection – are eligible to apply for grant funding. The charity's beneficiaries therefore include children and young people from serving, reservist and veteran families with Scottish parents; children and young people whose families live or serve in Scotland; and children and young people born in Scotland.

The charity adopts a responsive and flexible approach to grant-making. Debt and private school fees are not covered, but otherwise any eligible young person's personal circumstances will be evaluated to try to ensure their needs are best met.

Forces Children Scotland's main grant categories are as follows:

- **After-school activities:** The charity recognises the importance of extracurricular activities and will support continuity in this area.
- **Family support:** The charity understands that families sometimes need additional support and will fund 'home set-up' costs such as children's bedding, clothes and basic necessities.
- **Crisis support:** The charity reacts to families in crisis, funding immediate support with food costs to ensure no eligible child goes hungry.
- **Educational support:** The charity responds to individual needs, whether these concern IT equipment for children with special needs or uniform costs.
- **Young Carers Fund:** The charity provides small personal grants for young carers for items such as sporting equipment, dance lessons, electronic devices and short breaks in the UK.
- **Tertiary education:** The charity supports students up to undergraduate level with cost-of-living grants.

Forces Children Scotland has experienced a recent increase (of around 30%) in the number of families applying for financial support, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis. In 2021/22, the charity supported over 150 families and 283 children and young people through its financial assistance programmes. The charity also works in partnership with other grant-giving agencies to award grants quickly through the almonisation process (discussed in section 7.8).

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from Forces Children Scotland in addition to publicly available information.

4.4.5 Additional insights on eligibility criteria

The respondents to DSC's survey were invited to describe any further eligibility requirements in relation to the Armed Forces children and young people who could be supported by their funding. An illustrative selection of the responses has been reproduced in box 4.2. These comments demonstrate how some funders have additional or unique requirements that must be met in order for children and young people to receive funding – for example, the requirement that Armed Forces children and young people must have been disadvantaged by particular circumstances.

Box 4.2

Respondents' comments on further eligibility requirements

Their education must have been disadvantaged by their parent's service.

The children must be dependent [on] a parent or parents who meet our charitable object; that is, injured or disabled during military service.

Parent needs to be [a] past or present member of the regiment.

Children and young people must have a link to Scotland either by birth [or] the nationality of their parent, or [because] their parent has served or is serving in Scotland.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

As shown in box 4.3, the importance of adopting a flexible approach to eligibility was a theme that emerged in DSC's interviews for this research. Several interviewees told DSC about the need to approach each case individually. Additionally, two interviewees highlighted their flexible approach to age ranges, which centred on the extent of their beneficiaries' independence rather than strictly imposing a maximum age beyond which funding could not be provided.

Box 4.3

Interviewees' comments on the flexibility of eligibility criteria

Our Trustees don't want to go down the route of a scoring system - therefore, often [decisions are] more based on gut feel ... the main question is - is this related to service?

Families come to us, as an individual family, and their need is looked at in its entirety. And we don't have any set limits on what the family earns - it's all to do with 'what is the situation of that family?'. A family can get as much money as they need, within reason. ... Each case is very individual.

We only go up to when they are 26. If a child has a learning disability, where their mental age is more like that in the age range of a child, then we can also help.

We focus on independence, because we support children with, for example, learning difficulties, who reach the age of adulthood but do not become independent and may still require support.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

The degree to which funders' eligibility criteria can be described as flexible or restrictive may, in part, be determined by the type of organisation and how broad or narrow its charitable objects are. For example, large tri-Service Armed Forces charities that operate on a national scale and provide a wide range of support may have greater freedom to adopt a flexible approach to eligibility criteria in comparison to regimental charities. The latter typically have more restricted eligibility criteria for funding. This is because beneficiaries must be connected to the regiment in order to receive support, as underpinned by regimental charities' formal charitable objects. Some examples of how eligibility criteria are described in regimental charities' governing statements have been reproduced in box 4.4.

Box 4.4

Examples of regimental charities' eligibility statements

To relieve serving or former members of the regiment or former members of the forming regiments or the dependants of such persons who are in need.

To relieve either generally or individual necessitous persons being members or former members of R.E.M.E. [Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers] or their dependants.

The relief of persons in need, hardship or distress and who are past and present members of the Coldstream Guards or dependants.

To relieve members of the association or their dependants, or members or former members of the Service or their dependants who are in need.

Note: Information gathered from charities' governing documents published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

CHAPTER FIVE

What can be funded?



5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of what can be funded in the context of support for Armed Forces children and young people. It also covers how funders identify the needs of their beneficiaries and the key times in Armed Forces children and young people's lives that funding is provided.

This chapter draws primarily on data from the Directory of Social Change (DSC)'s survey of funders to answer the following research questions:

- How are beneficiaries and their needs identified?
- At what key times is funding support provided?
- What types of support are funded?
- What are the characteristics of funding for organisations?

The chapter also draws on DSC's interviews with funders and stakeholders, and a series of case studies are presented throughout the chapter to provide additional insights.

In line with the approach taken in other chapters, the survey data appears in green boxes, the interview quotes are shown in orange boxes and the case study content is identified in purple boxes.

5.2 HOW ARE BENEFICIARIES AND THEIR NEEDS IDENTIFIED?

The respondents to DSC's survey were asked to provide an explanation of their organisation's approach to identifying and responding to the needs of Armed Forces children and young people. Among the variety of approaches described, a common theme was collaboration. For many respondents, needs were brought to their attention by, or actively identified through working with, other organisations (such as case-working charities, schools or Ministry of Defence (MOD) welfare officers) or through direct engagement with Armed Forces families.

Only one of the respondents highlighted that they used evaluation as part of their process of identifying and responding to Armed Forces children and young people's needs.

To illustrate the range in the answers provided, a selection of responses has been reproduced in box 5.1.

Box 5.1

Respondents' comments on identifying and responding to Armed Forces children and young people's needs

We work in close collaboration with our delivery partners. We engage directly with parents and those who work with children to better understand their needs. We take into account published reports, data and research.

We monitor the difference our grant funding makes for our beneficiaries, and, through our funding programmes, we are able to amend projects and funding to respond to changing circumstances.

We identify [needs] through links with the families' federations [Army Families Federation, Naval Families Federation and RAF Families Federation] and welfare organisations, local authorities, links with schools, and links with other charities – [through] case-working and grant-giving.

Individual applications and casework are normally provided by SSAFA or the Royal British Legion. Others [come] via our battalion welfare officers and occasionally by a direct approach.

[We identify needs through] maintaining contact with delivery charities and responding to needs identified by them and [through] close cooperation with army organisations.

We react to grant requests for assistance. [We are] more reactive than proactive.

We work with established charitable partners with proven track records working with and supporting [Armed Forces children and young people].

[We identify needs via] professional input where needed or by referral from military welfare.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

When asked to explain how beneficiaries find out about their funding, the interviewees spoke about direct applications being prompted by online searches and word of mouth, and using social media to raise awareness. The interviewees also talked about engaging with partners at forums, conferences and events.

Some of the interviewees drew attention to their having multiple referral pathways in place – for example, whereby Armed Forces children and young people can be referred through the MOD’s internal welfare teams, other charities and social workers or care professionals. Box 5.2 provides a selection of illustrative quotes.

Box 5.2

Interviewees’ comments on how beneficiaries find out about their funding programmes

The regimental and corps association system is the primary mechanism through which support is ascertained. Referrals can come through counsellors, social workers and other professionals. [We] have planned discussions with GPs to help them understand that they can refer to [us] to deal with some underlying issues and that the charitable sector can be a source of support for this: raising awareness of support mechanisms – getting this message out is complex.

So, the direct funding. Our website has very clear information on it [saying] that we can help you [i.e. Armed Forces children and young people and their families] directly. And it’s quite simple ... so they can complete a form and come directly [to us] online. They can also come through lots of other routes: serving families can come through the internal [to the MOD] welfare system; veteran families can come through SSAFA and the Royal British Legion. There’re lots of routes in, and there’s a central case management system for the Armed Forces [community] called Mosaic, so we get families from all these different routes there: if a family needs some help ... hopefully they filter through to us.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

DSC's researchers also asked the interviewees what they thought some of the potential barriers were in regard to Armed Forces children and young people's access to funding. Answers included a lack of help-seeking behaviour, fear of stigma within the Armed Forces community, and adversarial relationships between parents and schools. A selection of quotes has been reproduced in box 5.3.

Box 5.3

Interviewees' comments on the barriers to Armed Forces children and young people's access to funding

For serving families, a distrust of [the] chain of command around welfare [can be a barrier]. If you say something [is wrong], your career may be stigmatised. That perception is false but persistent.

Within Service communities there can be an element of not wanting to reach out for support. Because most of our funding goes to families where a parent is still serving goes through a unit welfare team [internal to the MOD], you are ... having to go to your boss or your HR department to say you're struggling with something, which a lot of people don't want to do - and particularly if it's around children and partners, that can be a more difficult conversation. That's why we have direct applications to get around that.

The big one is the relationship between parents and schools. Parents don't always feel comfortable or confident to approach a school. Schools are not always as receptive to parents as they should be. [This] was something that came out of the Morgan review - some parents felt like they needed to fight to be heard.¹ The relationship can be quite adversarial. Things like that are certainly barriers.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

In addition to the formal interviews, DSC's researchers contacted representatives from three local authorities (one in England, Scotland and Wales respectively) via email and video calls to discuss barriers that may exist in relation to accessing funding for the Armed Forces children and young people in their local authority area.

Local authority representatives shared their experiences around helping local schools to access funding. They spoke about doing so through programmes such as the MOD's the AF3 Fund (formerly the Education Support Fund), managed by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund

¹ The Morgan review (Morgan, 2020) was a 2019 review of the implementation of additional support for learning in Scottish schools, led by Angela Morgan. It concluded by submitting a report and recommendations to Scottish ministers and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (a cross-party councillor-led organisation that champions local councils).

Trust; through Additional Support Needs funding (specific to Scotland); and through the Service Pupil Premium, which is available in England.

A selection of quotes on the perceived barriers to accessing funding has been reproduced in box 5.4 below.

Box 5.4

Local authority representatives' comments on the barriers to accessing funding for Armed Forces children and young people

SPP (Service Pupil Premium) is a hugely problematic and yet a very important source of funding. [For schools with small numbers of Armed Forces children and young people], it can be quite difficult to know how to best use that money [because it amounts to a smaller sum].

I do like the idea of more centralisation of SPP funding for local authorities to use in the way that they think best, but that goes against the current political climate of less localised control in terms of the local authority as the middle tier of education. So there's a fundamental philosophical discord.

SPP is £320 per pupil [and] it's not sufficient if you are a single [Armed Forces] child in a primary school. . . . Is there a better way of delivering SPP money? For example, our schools collectively receive about £1 million. It is clear that some schools simply don't spend this money effectively and impactfully. Would it be better to give that money to the council to use as it thinks is best, based on the evidence?

I'm not sure how widely shared it is that teachers can access funding if they [work with] children that require additional support due to being from an Armed Forces background.

It is challenging. There [have been] education officers who dealt with Additional Support Needs, and Armed Forces children weren't really on their radar.

Those [schools] that are associated with or very close to the barracks are quite aware of [the funding options], especially if they have accessed the Education Support Fund (ESF) [now the AF3 Fund] in the past. Historically, it's been these schools that've had the majority of Armed Forces children due to their proximity to the barracks. Now, our evidence shows [Armed Forces children] are across the whole of the local authority [area]. We have been trying to get the message out through the education department that all schools should be aware of [the AF3 Fund, formerly the ESF].

To try and engage schools with a small number of Armed Forces children is very difficult. For example, it's not easy to get them to release a member of staff to go to a conference or release pupils to attend [an event]. Neither is it easy to get busy school leaders to read newsletters and come to briefings.

Local authority representatives

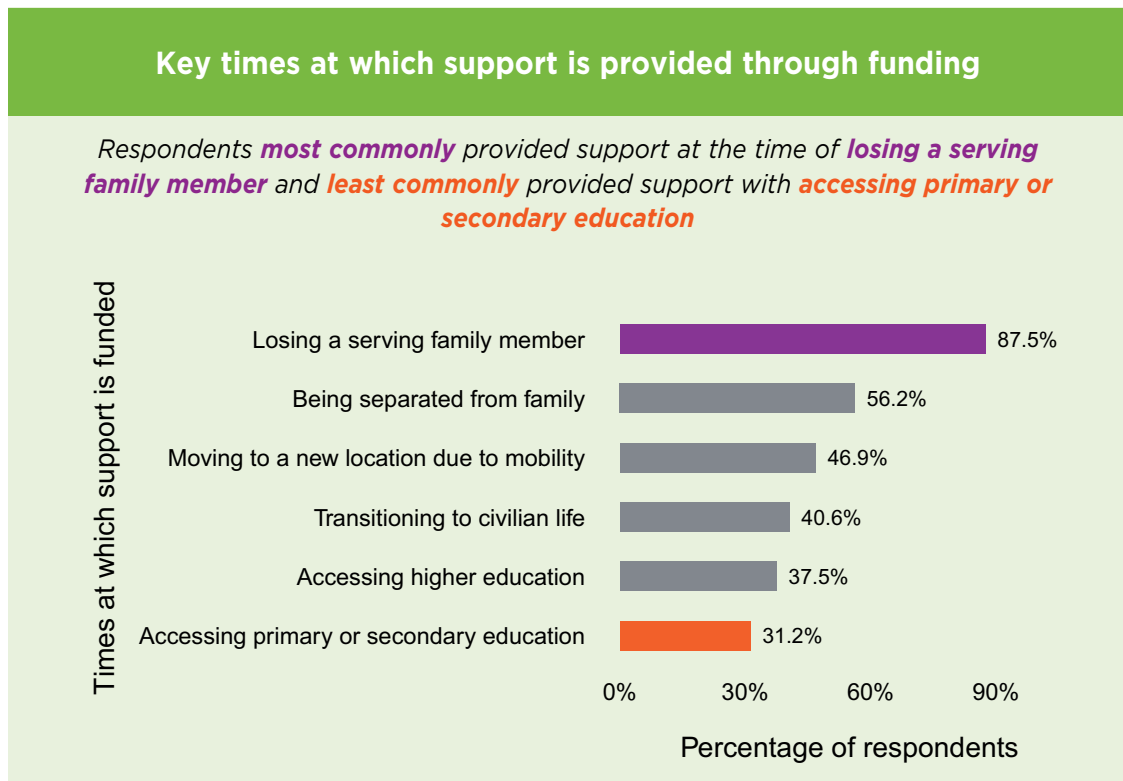
Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

5.3 AT WHAT KEY TIMES IS FUNDING SUPPORT PROVIDED?

DSC's survey asked whether the participating organisations provided funding to support Armed Forces children and young people during some key events or time periods related to Service life. The events outlined in figure 5.1 – such as deployment, mobility and parental bereavement – are not experienced by all Armed Forces children and young people. However, these events can present unique challenges or stressors for Armed Forces children and young people.

As figure 5.1 shows, the vast majority (87.5%) of the respondents provided funding to support Armed Forces children and young people facing bereavement after the loss of a serving family member. Meanwhile, over half (56.2%) of the respondents provided funding to support Armed Forces children and young people during times of separation – for example, during deployment or 'weekending' (where serving personnel live separately from their families during the week and return home at the weekend). The least common was funding to help with access to primary or secondary education, reported by just under one-third (31.2%) of the respondents.

Figure 5.1



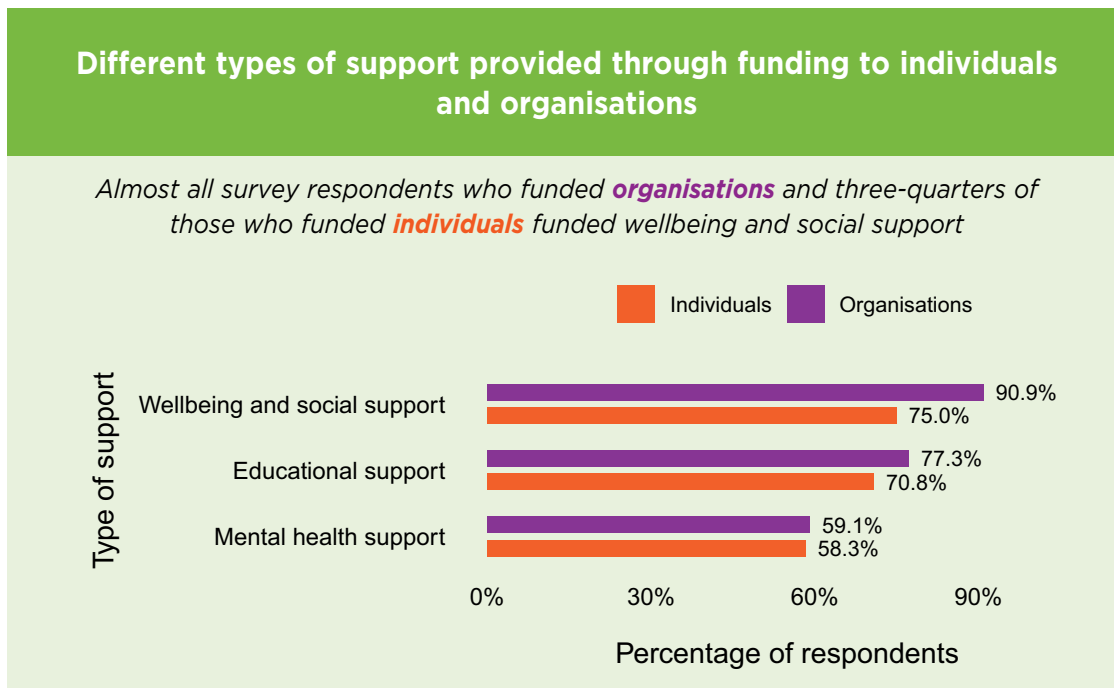
Note: There were 32 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer). Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

5.4 WHAT TYPES OF SUPPORT ARE FUNDED?

DSC's survey asked respondents what types of support for Armed Forces children and young people their organisation funded and, specifically, whether it funded education, mental health, wellbeing and social support, or policy and research. It should be noted that is not an exhaustive list of the different types of funding support available - many of the specialist child-focused funders told DSC (through the survey and interview process) that they respond flexibly to any needs of Armed Forces children and young people where possible.

As shown in figure 5.2, for both organisations that made grants for organisations and those that made grants directly to individuals, wellbeing and social support was the most common type of funding support provided, followed by educational support and then mental health support.

Figure 5.2



Note: Percentages were calculated out of 24 survey respondents whose organisation provided funding to individuals and 22 survey respondents whose organisation provided funding to other organisations. Respondents could select more than one of the responses; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

5.4.1 What types of educational support are funded?

DSC's survey asked the respondents whether they funded any of the following types of educational support:

- clothing (e.g. school uniforms and sports kits);
- resources (e.g. books or IT equipment);
- learning support (e.g. one-to-one or group tutoring);
- extracurricular lessons (e.g. sports coaching or music lessons);
- school trips (e.g. day trips or residential trips);
- transport (e.g. bus, train or taxi fares);
- school fees, bursaries or scholarships;
- career support and life skills.

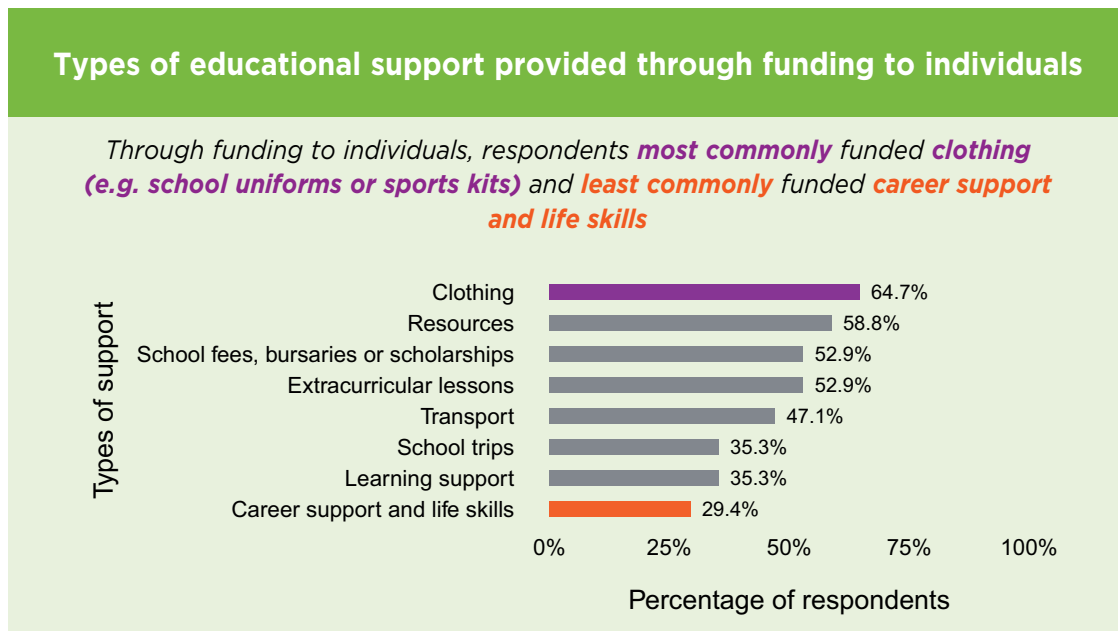
Educational support through funding to individuals

Out of the respondents to this question (N=26), a total of 17 organisations reported that they funded at least one type of educational support through grants to individuals. The other nine organisations said that they did not fund educational support through funding to individuals.

Figure 5.3 shows that clothing (e.g. school uniforms and sports kits) was the type of educational support that was most commonly (64.7%) provided by the respondents. This was followed closely by other resources (58.8%), such as books or IT equipment. Just over half (52.9%) of the respondents funded school fees, bursaries or scholarships, or extracurricular lessons.

It was less common for the respondents to provide funding for school trips (35.3%) or learning support (35.3%). Career support and life skills was the least commonly funded area, supported by under one-third (29.4%) of the respondents.

Figure 5.3



Note: There were 17 positive responses to this question. Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

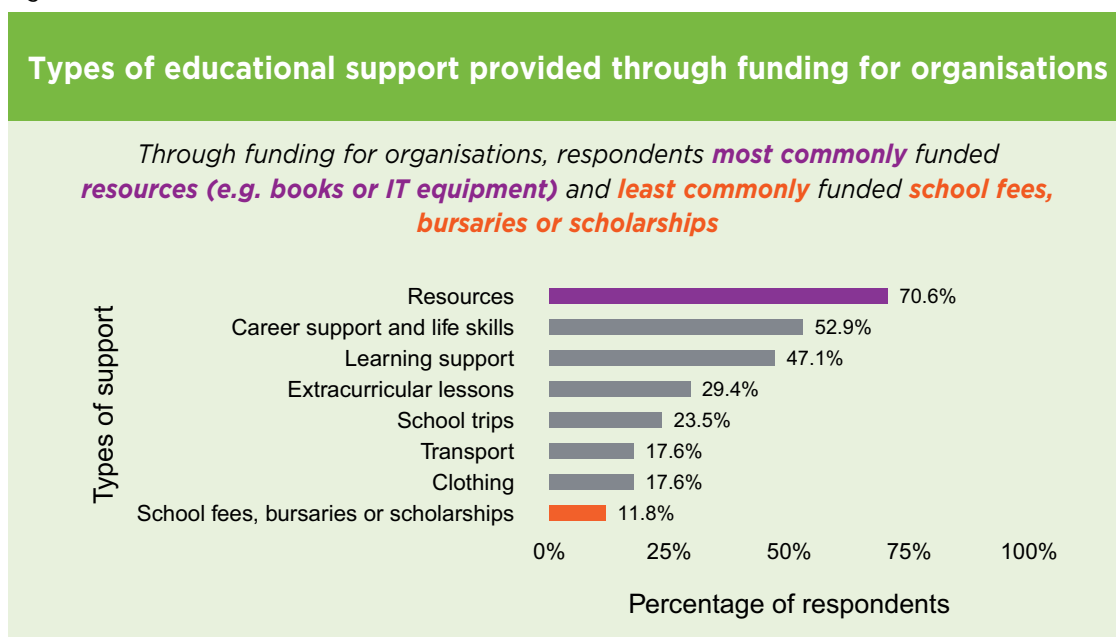
Educational support through funding for organisations

Continuing the focus on educational support, DSC’s survey asked whether the participating organisations gave funding to other organisations for educational support. Out of the respondents to this question (N=24), 17 organisations reported that they funded at least one type of educational support through funding for other organisations. The remaining seven organisations stated that they did not fund educational support through funding for other organisations.

Figure 5.4 shows that resources (e.g. books or IT equipment) were the type of educational support most commonly (70.6%) funded by the respondents through funding for organisations. This was followed by career support and life skills (52.9%), learning support (47.1%), extracurricular lessons (29.4%) and school trips (23.5%).

Meanwhile, the respondents were less likely to fund organisations to provide transport (17.6%), clothing (17.6%), and school fees, bursaries or scholarships (11.8%).

Figure 5.4



Note: There were 17 positive responses to this question. Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

The Armed Forces Education Trust is an example of a specialist funder whose core focus is on education. The charity provides funding to educational institutions and directly to Armed Forces children and young people to address a wide range of needs, as highlighted in the case study below.

Case study: Armed Forces Education Trust

The Armed Forces Education Trust (AFET) has had a long and varied history, including several name changes since its creation in 1855. It originally opened as The Soldiers’ Daughters’ Home, supporting the orphaned daughters of soldiers who fought in the Crimean War. Throughout the next 90 years, the home supported the daughters of servicemen before becoming a series of independent schools. In 2011, it transitioned to become a grant-giving trust, using the income from having leased the school to Cognita (AFET, 2022).

Today, AFET supports children and young people, anywhere in the world, whose education has been, or is at risk of being, disrupted or disadvantaged by their parents' service in the UK Armed Forces, whether this service was past or present. It also provides schools with funding to support Armed Forces children and young people (AFET, 2022).

AFET achieves these charitable objects by awarding individual and collective grants to help improve the lives of Armed Forces children and young people. AFET's grants are specifically intended to improve Armed Forces children and young people's educational opportunities or to support special skills and talents. In 2022, it awarded over £186,900 in grants directly to 20 children and young people and a further £265,600 in grants to educational institutions.

In a typical financial year, approximately one-third of AFET's expenditure is dedicated to providing grants to individuals, which are most commonly awarded for secondary boarding school fees. AFET often provides financial help towards fees when the Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) stops.² This can be the case, for example, when a parent leaves the Armed Forces during a critical stage in their child's education. In certain circumstances, temporary financial support might also be provided while parents appeal CEA decisions. All individual grants are awarded through a combination of means testing and an in-depth assessment of the family's circumstances.

The remaining two-thirds of AFET's expenditure is spent on grants awarded to educational providers, either schools or local education authorities. Grants are used to fund specific interventions or staff members who support Armed Forces children and young people directly. Grants are also given to support individual Armed Forces children and young people in the short term while local authority funding is sought.

Recent examples of collective grants include an art project that brought together Armed Forces children and young people from all three Service branches, a teaching assistant to give transition support to Armed Forces pupils, extra classroom support for Nepalese children, extra language support for children moving to Wales, and maths interventions. Recently, AFET has purchased books on the topic of deployment for Armed Forces children and young people.

During the interview process, a representative of AFET spoke to DSC about the importance of collaboration with other organisations – such as charities, schools, Armed Forces unit welfare teams and local authorities – to provide effective funding support for Armed Forces children and young people to address their particular needs.

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the Armed Forces Education Trust in addition to publicly available information.

² The Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) is an employee allowance (for eligible Service personnel) towards school fees in order to mitigate against high levels of mobility.

Other responses

Several respondents provided their own answers or added further detail, as the educational support they provided through funding to individuals or organisations was different from the options in the survey. Several example responses have been reproduced in box 5.5.

Box 5.5

Respondents' comments on other types of educational support provided through funding to individuals or organisations

Activities linked to celebrating Service children's experiences. Training for school staff. Staff time to deliver activities.

Cost-of-living grants for tertiary students.

Funding group support in schools such as teaching assistants, ELSA [emotional literacy support assistants], Thrive [approach, which uses tools and training around social and emotional development], learning interventions, transition support, etc.

Summer camps and activities.

Volunteering.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

5.4.2 What types of mental health support are funded?

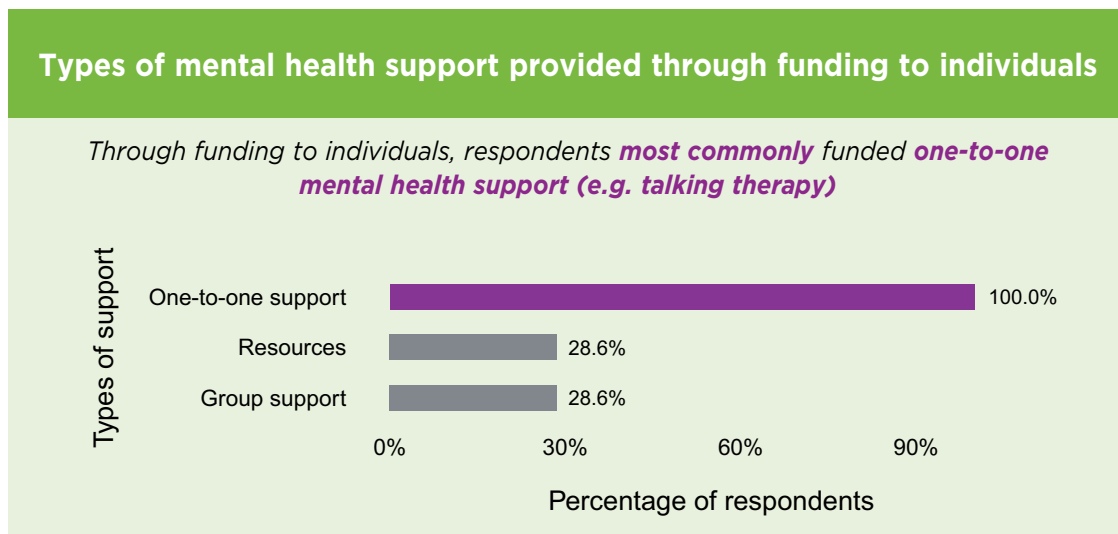
DSC's survey asked the respondents whether they funded any of the following types of mental health support:

- one-to-one support (e.g. talking therapy);
- group support (e.g. group counselling);
- resources (e.g. access to online support, books or information).

Mental health support provided through funding to individuals

Turning now to look at respondents' funding for mental health support, out of the respondents to this question (N=25), a total of 14 respondents reported that they funded at least one type of mental health support through funding to individuals. As shown in figure 5.5, one-to-one support (e.g. talking therapy) was provided by all of the respondents that provided any type of mental health support. Notably lower proportions - under one-third - of the respondents funded group support (28.6%) and resources (28.6%).

Figure 5.5



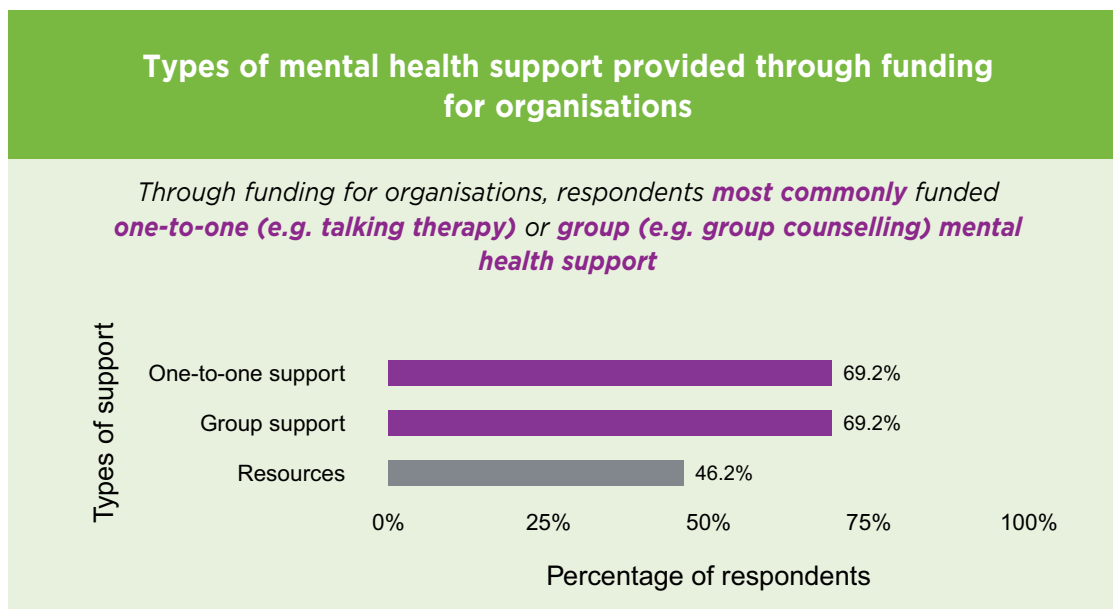
Note: There were 14 positive responses to this question. Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

Mental health support provided through funding for organisations

Out of the respondents to this question (N=21), a total of 13 respondents reported that they funded at least one type of mental health support through funding for organisations. In contrast to the rates at which mental health support was provided through funding to individuals, figure 5.6 shows that one-to-one support (e.g. talking therapy) and group support (e.g. group counselling) were provided by equal proportions of the respondents (69.2%).

A slightly lower proportion (46.2%) of the respondents provided access to resources (e.g. access to online support, books or information) through their funding for organisations.

Figure 5.6



Note: There were 13 positive responses to this question. Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

5.4.3 What types of wellbeing and social support are funded?

DSC's survey asked the respondents whether they funded any of the following types of wellbeing and social support:

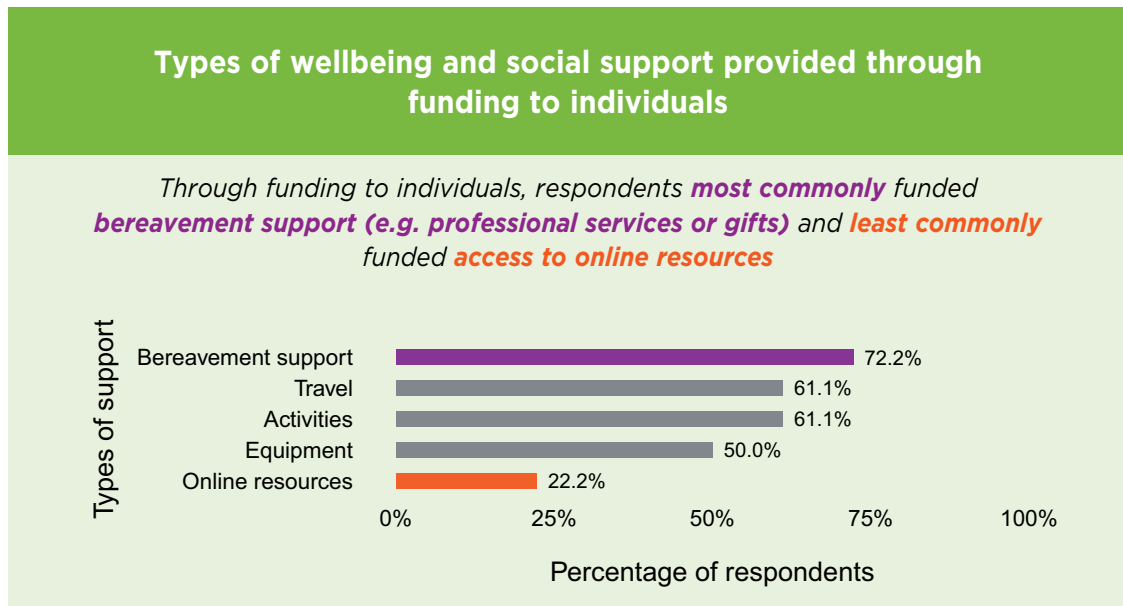
- activities (e.g. sports, music, dance or drama groups);
- travel (e.g. to visit family members or friends);
- equipment (e.g. sports equipment, crafts or non-school books);
- access to online resources (e.g. subscription services);
- bereavement support (e.g. professional services or gifts).

Wellbeing and social support provided through funding to individuals

In total, 18 respondents said they gave funding to individuals to provide Armed Forces children and young people with wellbeing and social support. Eight of the respondents said that they did not fund this type of support.

As shown in figure 5.7, bereavement support was the type of social and wellbeing support most commonly (72.2%) provided by the respondents. This was followed by approximately three-fifths that provided travel (61.1%) or activities (61.1%).

Figure 5.7



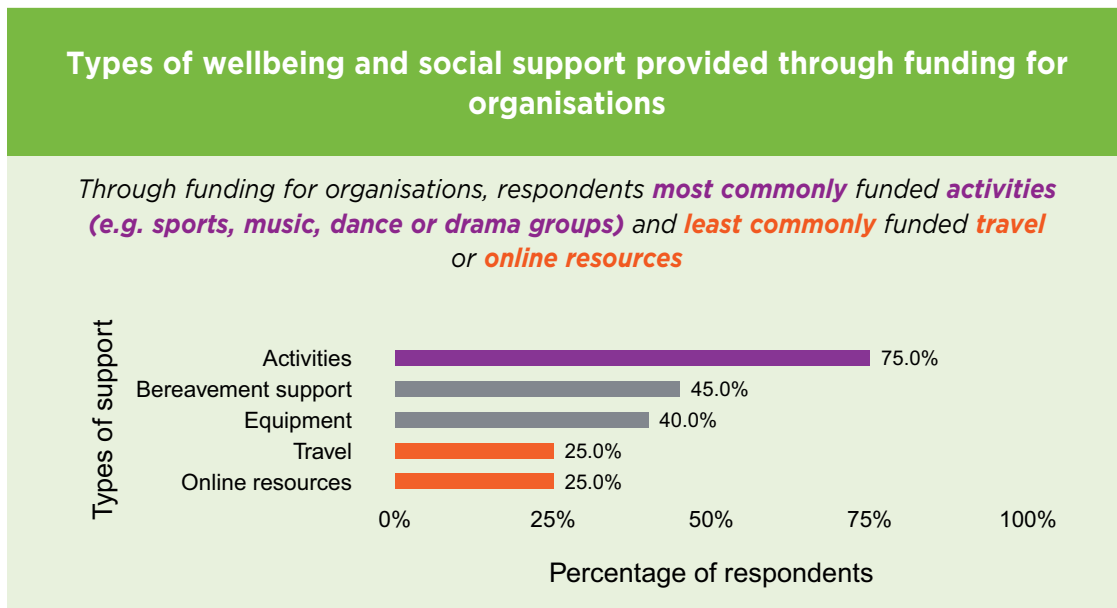
Note: There were 18 positive responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer). Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

Wellbeing and social support provided through funding for organisations

In total, 20 respondents said they provided funding for organisations to provide Armed Forces children and young people with wellbeing and social support. Seven of the respondents said that they did not fund this type of support.

As shown in figure 5.8, in terms of funding for organisations, activities (such as sports, music and dance or drama groups) were the most commonly funded (72.2%) type of wellbeing and social support. However, unlike in the case of funding to individuals, travel was one of the least commonly funded types of wellbeing and social support (25.0%).

Figure 5.8



Note: There were 20 positive responses to this question (not including those reporting an ‘other’ answer). Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

Other responses

Several respondents provided their own answer, or added further detail, as the wellbeing and social support they provided through funding to individuals or organisations was different from the options in the survey. Several example responses have been reproduced in box 5.6.

Box 5.6

Respondents’ comments on other types of wellbeing and social support provided through funding to individuals or organisations

Family fellowship activities.

Summer camps for those in need of support.

We have funded music lessons.

Survey respondents

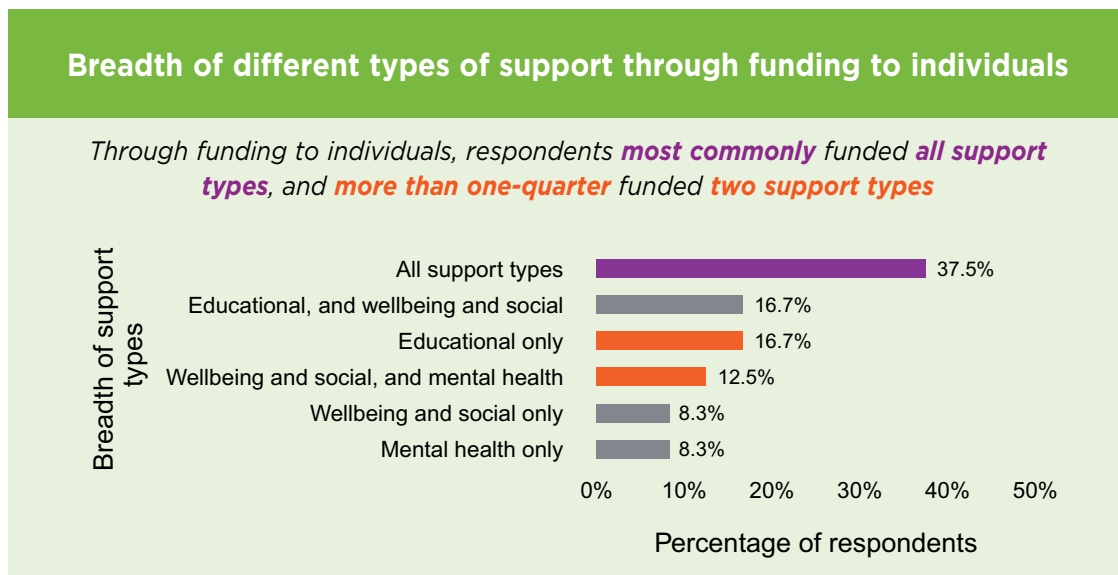
Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

5.4.4 What breadth of funding is available across different areas?

In order to better understand the extent to which funders provide support across different areas of Armed Forces children and young people’s needs, DSC’s researchers undertook additional analysis on the combinations of areas of support that the survey respondents indicated providing.

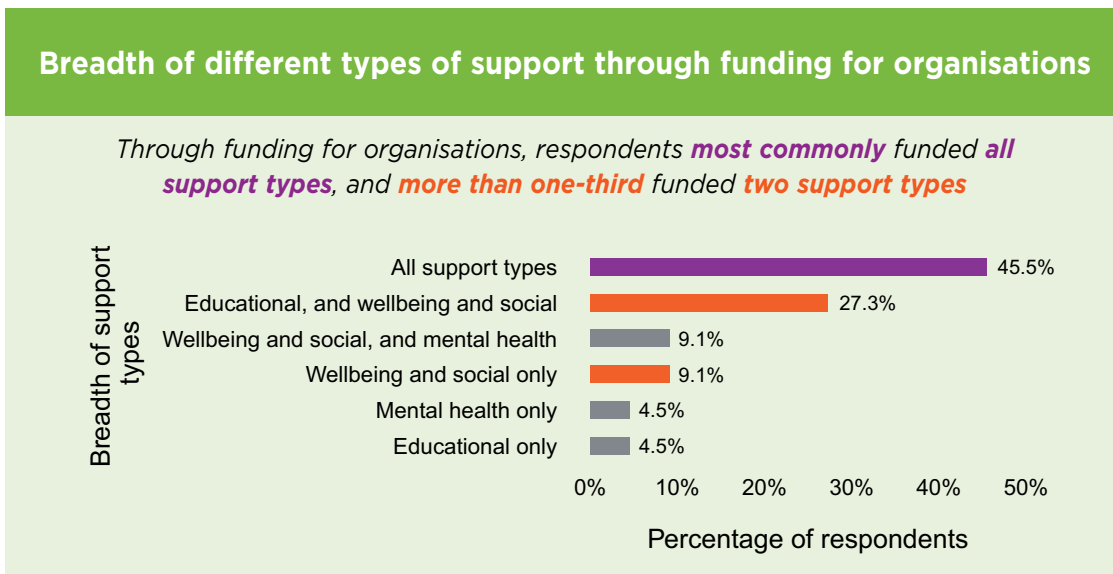
As shown in figures 5.9 and 5.10, the respondents generally had a broad remit of support for Armed Forces children and young people. That is, their support encompassed educational support, wellbeing and social support, and mental health support: 37.5% provided all three types of support and 29.2% (not shown in figure 5.9 provided two types of support through funding to individuals; meanwhile, 45.5% provided all three types of support and 36.4% (not shown in figure 5.10) provided two types of support through funding for organisations.

Figure 5.9



Note: Percentages were calculated out of 24 respondents who selected one or more type of support across the three areas (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

Figure 5.10



Note: Percentages were calculated out of 22 respondents who selected one or more type of support across the three areas (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

5.4.5 What types of policy and research work are funded?

Overall, only a minority of the survey respondents (N=7) said that they funded organisations to carry out policy and research work which focused on Armed Forces children and young people. The types of policy and research work that these respondents funded, in order of frequency, were:

- research (e.g. the production of analysis and reports through surveys), funded by 85.7% of the respondents;
- networking (e.g. through forums or membership groups), funded by 71.4% of the respondents;
- influencing policy (e.g. lobbying governments and advocating for policy change), funded by 57.1% of the respondents;
- campaigns (e.g. policy and media campaigns, or awareness-raising campaigns), funded by just 14.3% of the respondents.

The following case study focuses on the Naval Children’s Charity, an organisation that has allocated significant attention to research – both in a funding capacity and with respect to using research to inform its funding strategy.

Case study: Naval Children's Charity

Over nearly 200 years of its history, the Naval Children's Charity (NCC)'s approach to providing funding support to Armed Forces children and young people has continually evolved. While the charity's central aim remains relatively unchanged - 'to help and provide support for Naval children and young people who are in need, hardship or distress' - the research funded by NCC suggests the types of need experienced by its beneficiaries have changed significantly, even within the previous decade (NCC, 2022a).

NCC was originally established to support children in various orphanages based in the naval areas of Portsmouth and Kent. In 1999, NCC broadened its approach to support naval children more widely (NCC, 2022b). The charity has gradually grown since. Each year, it helps around 2,000 children directly (through grants made to children and their families) and thousands more through its resources and work with communities and other organisations (NCC, 2022c).

During an interview with DSC, a charity representative noted that, five to ten years ago, NCC's primary focus was on education. In particular, financial support to access private education for naval children whose parents had been injured in Iraq and Afghanistan accounted for a significant proportion of the charity's funding budget.

Now, the charity's focus has shifted to providing holistic funding support to address the needs of Royal Navy and Royal Marines children as well as funding community-based work and broader crisis support. NCC's grants to individuals respond to broad topics such as health, wellbeing, security, education and life chances, whereas the charity's Naval Community Projects scheme provides grants to schools and communities to support Royal Navy and Royal Marines children.

Much of NCC's ability to accurately assess - and swiftly react to - the changing needs of its beneficiaries has been underpinned by its ongoing policy work and commitment to funding research. This approach aims to build a robust evidence base for the unique challenges or stressors which may affect Armed Forces children and young people, as well as what works in supporting them.

In 2009, NCC commissioned a seminal piece of research called *The Overlooked Casualties of Conflict*, which explored a previously under-researched topic: the impact of parents' service in Iraq and Afghanistan on Armed Forces children and young people (RNRMC, 2009). The report set forth a series of practical recommendations to mitigate against some of the impacts that deployment can have on children's behaviour, emotional wellbeing, psychological development and educational attainment (RNRMC, 2009).

Ten years later, in 2019, the charity commissioned the Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research (VFI) to produce *The Impact of Service Life*

on the Military Child: The overlooked casualties of conflict – update and review report (Godier-McBard et al., 2021). This report recognised that the end of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq has not put an end to issues such as family separation and that different stressors on Service families have emerged, including issues around social media and fake news (Godier-McBard et al., 2021). Since publication, the report has been a key part of NCC’s strategic thinking around how to best help Royal Navy and Royal Marines children and young people.

Most recently, NCC commissioned VFI to publish *‘Dropping in and out’: Social media and internet-based communication amongst Naval families during separation* (Wood et al., 2022). The report investigated how naval families use social media during periods of deployment. In line with earlier reports, this research aimed to provide evidence on a previously under-researched topic that could support policy and practice.

Each of these pieces of research has informed NCC’s knowledge about the lived experiences of Armed Forces children and young people, enabling the charity to tailor its package of holistic support and set its funding priorities accordingly. More widely, the research funded by NCC has created a valuable set of resources to better understand the unique challenges or stressors Royal Navy and Royal Marines children may face. Such research can be used by practitioners, teachers, charity representatives and any other individuals working with Armed Forces children and young people.

Note: Some of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the Naval Children’s Charity in addition to publicly available information.

5.5 WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FUNDING FOR ORGANISATIONS?

To gain insights into the nature of funding for organisations, DSC’s survey asked respondents about several key characteristics. These were whether the respondents’ organisations provided funding for core costs, the extent to which they offered one-off versus repeat funding and whether they provided single-year or multi-year funding.

The characteristics of funding for organisations were also discussed by several interviewees in the context of their perceptions of the barriers and enablers to accessing funding. A selection of interview quotes has been reproduced throughout this section.

5.5.1 To what extent is funding available for core costs?

Core costs encompass the expenditure related to running an organisation, aside from project costs (Cairns et al., 2016). They can include costs such as administration, salaries for staff, governance, and small capital items such as office furniture and equipment.

Expenditure on core costs funds the essential resources that charities and voluntary sector organisations need to provide support to their beneficiaries, yet they can face challenges in accessing funding for core costs (House of Lords Select Committee on Charities, 2017). This long-standing challenge around accessing funding for core costs has become a higher-priority issue at the time of writing, amid the cost-of-living crisis in late 2022 (see Preston, 2022). Charities and voluntary sector organisations are experiencing and responding to higher costs associated with the current economic environment, such as increased energy bills (Charity Finance Group, 2022) and overheads such as offices, IT and rent (Howarth and Cole, 2023).

The Institute for Voluntary Action Research argues that offering unrestricted funding that can be used to cover core costs 'is the single most powerful thing that funders can do to support charities' by enabling them to be agile and decisive, deal with ever-changing demands and effectively plan for uncertainties in the future (Firth et al., 2021, p. 24). One of the interviewees in DSC's research highlighted the potential importance of core funding in relation to staffing. As shown in box 5.7, this interviewee described the importance of the work done through the funding of staff but highlighted how this can be difficult to achieve in practice.

Box 5.7

Interviewee comment on core funding

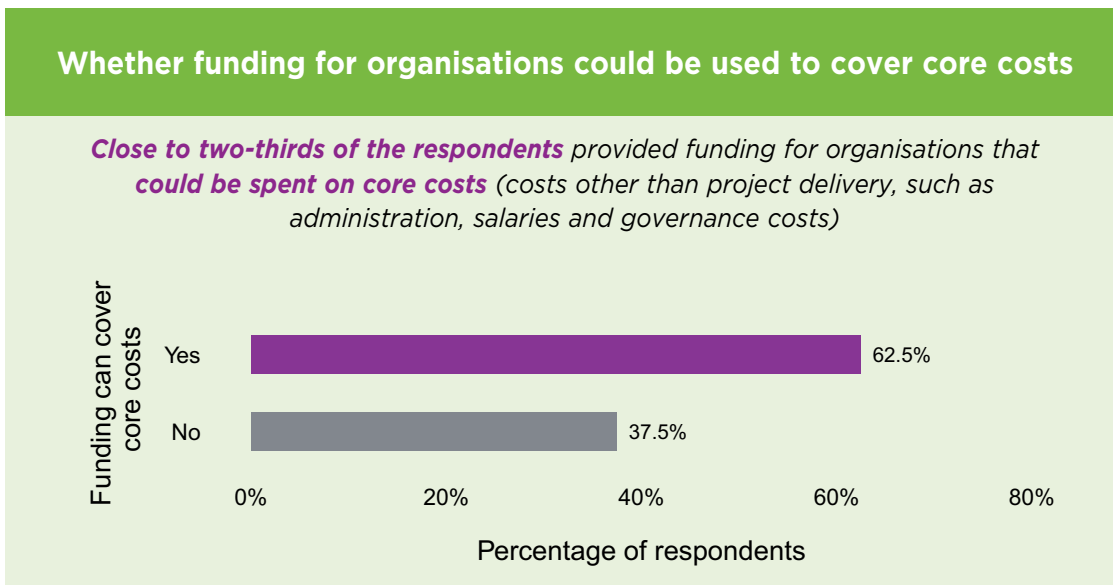
Our consultation activities have identified that some of the most effective work is done through having good staff that know what they're doing, know the Armed Forces community and the lifestyle, and can dedicate some time. Buying resources or doing courses is all well and good but unless you have that bank of knowledge, there's only so much you can do. So, people are the most important thing, but none of [the main three educational] grant funding streams [in this interviewee's context] are keen to fund people.

Interviewee

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

To provide a better understanding of the extent to which funding for core costs was available from the organisations that provided funding to support Armed Forces children and young people, DSC's survey asked respondents to provide information about how the organisations they funded could use their funding. As shown in figure 5.11, close to two-thirds (62.5%) of the respondents provided funding for organisations that could be spent on core costs. However, more than one-third (37.5%) of the respondents did not provide funding for organisations that could be used to cover core costs.

Figure 5.11



Note: There were 24 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

A number of the respondents added further detail to their responses. Several example responses have been reproduced in box 5.8. The responses demonstrate some of the ambiguities and complexities around accessing funding for core costs.

Box 5.8

Respondents' comments on whether they funded core costs

Bursarial support only.

[Core costs are funded if they are] part of the application, for example research or operational costs within a bid for support.

Organisations can include reasonable overheads for their project delivery.

'Rarely - but could if appropriate.'

[We will fund] salaries, overheads, costs of operations, costs of projects, etc.

We aim to fund projects but accept that an element of grants may be used to fund central costs.

We provide funding for two of our partners which they in turn use in part or in full to cover salary costs.

We provide generic funding to charities, usually with a preference but not insistence on providing for projects. As a result, I am sure a proportion is used for core costs, and we are comfortable with that.

While we can fund limited core costs, we are primarily a project funder.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

5.5.2 What is the extent of one-off and repeat funding?

In addition to examining core costs, DSC aimed to provide an understanding of the extent to which the funders provided one-off funding and repeat funding. One-off funding is where an organisation receives only one grant for a particular programme or project; conversely, repeat funding is where an organisation is awarded more than one grant for a particular programme or project.

Whether funding is one off or repeat can have implications for the longer-term sustainability of particular projects. This was a challenge highlighted by one of the schools featured in the case studies in section 4.3 and also during the interview component of DSC's research: as shown in box 5.9, one of the interviewees described how a lack of access to repeat funding can potentially foreclose the continuation of otherwise successful projects in schools.

Box 5.9

Interviewee comment on the nature of funding

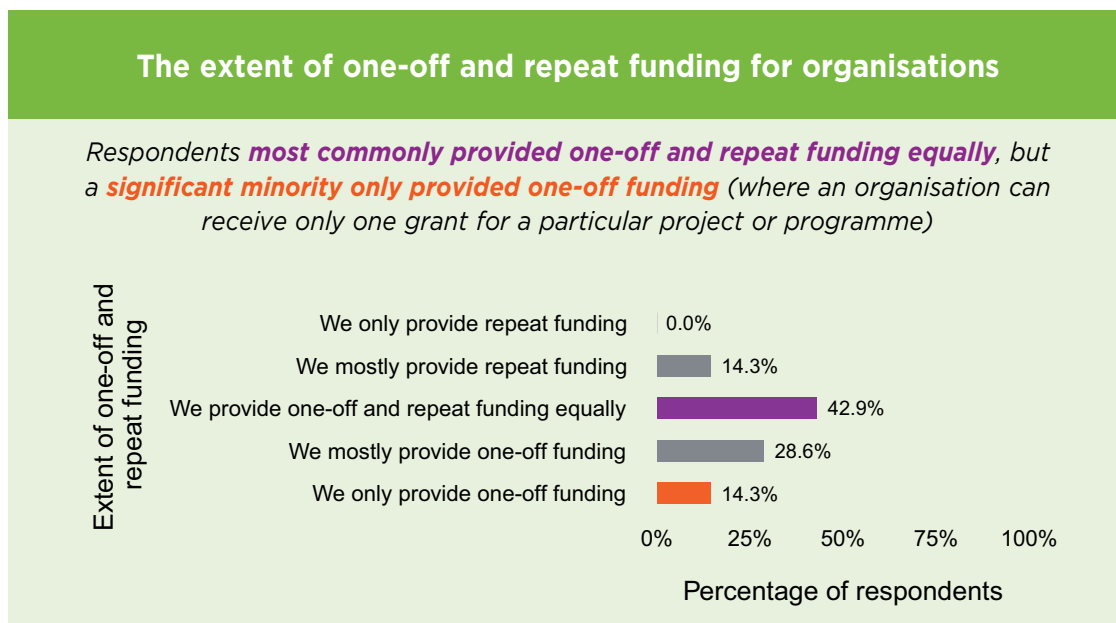
The problem with a lot of the grant-funded streams - including the main three that schools would be looking at [in this interviewee's context] - is that all of them are against continuous funding for the same project, or continued funding for staffing. ... They'll come back to you and say 'you've applied for the same thing again, so the answer is no'. ... So that's definitely a big barrier for the schools as well, because, actually, if they're doing something that works, what is wrong with doing it again? They've got a new cohort of children, so there shouldn't be a problem with it, but there is [from a funding perspective].

Interviewee

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

The participants in DSC’s survey were asked whether they typically provided one-off funding, repeat funding or a mixture of both through their funding for organisations. As shown in figure 5.12, the respondents most commonly (42.9%) reported that an equal mixture of one-off and repeat funding best characterised their organisation’s approach. Nevertheless, more than one-quarter (28.6%) of the respondents stated that they mostly provided one-off funding, and a small but significant minority (14.3%) of the respondents indicated that they only provided one-off funding. Conversely, the same proportion (14.3%) of the respondents reported mostly providing repeat funding, and none of the respondents reported that they provided only repeat funding.

Figure 5.12



Note: There were 21 responses to this question (not including those reporting an ‘other’ answer).

5.5.3 What is the extent of single- and multi-year funding?

The duration of funding is an important consideration because shorter agreements around delivering projects, support or services have been reported to have ‘made it difficult for charities to plan for financial sustainability’. Moreover, they can create ‘exacerbated bureaucracy’ related to the time commitments involved in preparing and submitting funding applications, as well as difficulties achieving objectives over relatively short time frames such as a year (House of Lords Select Committee on Charities, 2017, p. 53).

Some of these issues were discussed by an interviewee in DSC's research. As shown in box 5.10, this interviewee highlighted the implications of single-year funding for planning and, in the context of government funding, how longer funding contracts can also face uncertainties relating to changing priorities.

Box 5.10

Interviewee comment on single-year versus multi-year funding

Government funding is a key challenge. The year-on-year funding system is problematic. It doesn't allow us to plan consistently and there are different priorities so that's the big barrier when talking about funding. . . . There are a lot of grant-funded projects in our department. Many are now funded for three years at a time but funding always will still align with the government and what its priorities are. Every time we get a new education minister, we're at risk of them saying, 'Well I don't necessarily support the Armed Forces so I'm not willing to support the funding of this work.' So, I have to be really mindful of that.

Interviewee

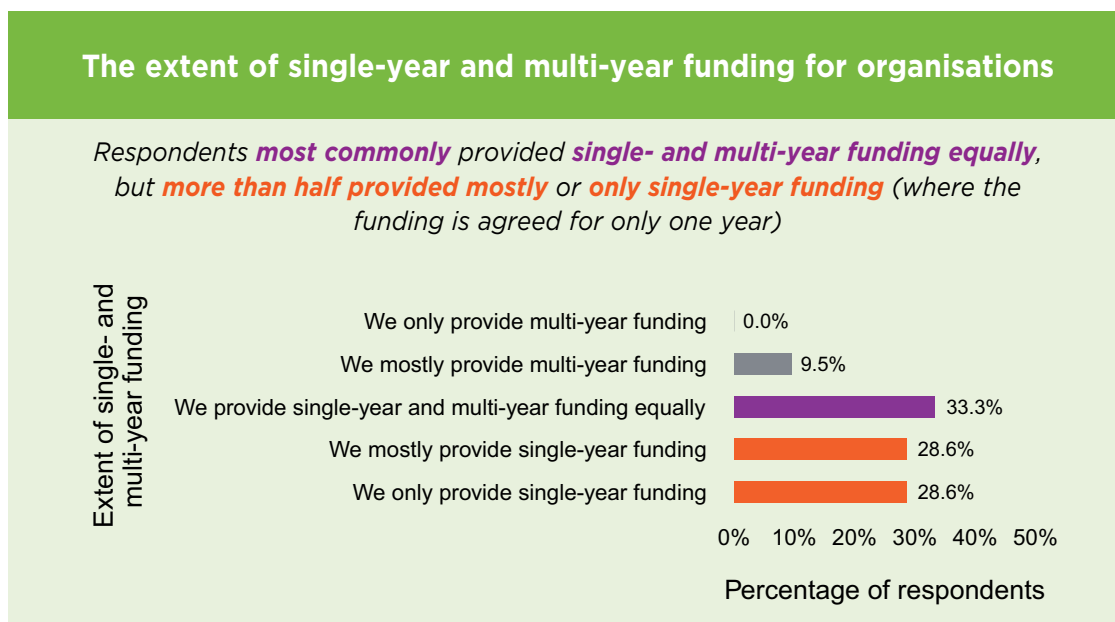
Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

DSC's survey also asked the respondents about the extent to which the funding they provided to support Armed Forces children and young people was single-year (where funding is agreed for only one year) or multi-year (where funding is agreed for more than one year, even if it may have year-to-year conditions).

As shown in figure 5.13, one-third (33.3%) of the respondents said that an equal mix of single- and multi-year funding best characterised their organisation's funding approach. Only one-tenth (9.5%) of the respondents said that they mostly provided multi-year funding, and more than half provided mostly or only single-year funding (28.6% each).

Overall, the responses suggest that funding for organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people more commonly tends towards single-year arrangements. It is important to note that this reflects what funders provide - it may or may not reflect demand from recipient organisations.

Figure 5.13



Note: There were 21 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

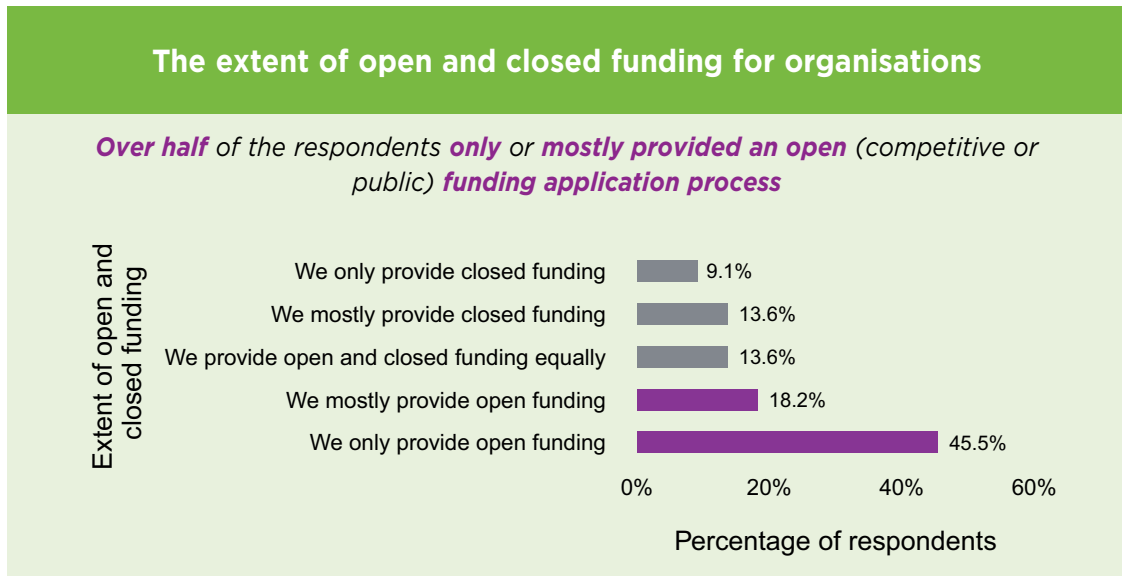
5.5.4 What is the extent of open and closed funding?

A characteristic of the funding process – as opposed to the nature of the funding itself – can be whether the application process for obtaining funding is open (there is a competitive application process) or closed (there is no formal application process). The extent to which funding provided to organisations is open or closed has important implications for the future distribution of and access to funding in the sector: the greater the prevalence of open funding, the more accessible this funding is for new organisations; conversely, the greater the prevalence of closed funding, the less accessible this funding is for new organisations.

As shown in figure 5.14, in response to DSC's survey, almost half (45.5%) of the organisations surveyed stated that they exclusively used open or competitive application processes when awarding funding. In addition, just under one-fifth (18.2%) of the respondents indicated that they mostly provided funding through an open application process. In contrast, just over one-fifth of the respondents reported that they only (9.1%) or mostly (13.6%) provided funding through a closed application process.

Overall, the survey responses suggest that the majority of funders are open to new grant applicants. However, it also suggests that a small but significant proportion of funders use closed application processes and are therefore less easily accessible for new applicants.

Figure 5.14



Note: There were 22 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

CHAPTER SIX

What is the role of monitoring and evaluation?



6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the role monitoring and evaluation play in the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people, including how much is currently known about monitoring in this area, and funders' requirements for and perceptions of monitoring and evaluation.

This chapter draws primarily on data from the Directory of Social Change (DSC)'s survey of funders to answer the following research questions:

- What is known about the monitoring of funding for Armed Forces children and young people?
- What requirements for evaluation do funders of other organisations have?
- What are the perceived barriers and enablers to evaluation?
- What are the perceived purposes of monitoring and evaluation?

The chapter also draws on DSC's interviews with funders and stakeholders, and a series of case studies are presented throughout the chapter to provide additional insights.

In line with the approach taken in other chapters, the survey data appears in green boxes, the interview quotes are shown in orange boxes and the case study content is identified in purple boxes.

6.2 WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE MONITORING OF FUNDING FOR ARMED FORCES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

Monitoring can be defined, in the context of this report, as the routine collection of administrative data relating to the funding of support for Armed Forces children and young people. This applies to both funding to individuals (i.e. funding given directly to Armed Forces children and young people or to a parent or guardian on their behalf) and funding for other organisations (i.e. money given to an organisation to support Armed Forces children and young people through its services or programmes). Monitoring is a key foundation for evaluation – and can be used by both funders and recipient organisations alike to better inform decision-making and evidence the impact of funding.

Two important components of monitoring were highlighted earlier in this report (see sections 3.3 and 3.4): information about the value of funding that is specifically intended to support Armed Forces children and young people, and information about the number of organisations or individuals that receive funding.

As discussed in chapter 3, DSC's researchers analysed the most recent published accounts of all non-specialist funders (N=62). Only five of these non-specialist funders published information on how much of their funding for organisations was directed to supporting Armed Forces children and young people and how many organisations they funded for this purpose. Meanwhile, similar information related to funding to individuals was not reported by any of these non-specialist funders. It may be the case that some funders monitor this data internally and do not publish it. However, the findings discussed in section 3.2 suggest that a substantive proportion of funders do not collect this type of data for monitoring purposes.

Among the survey respondents who reported that they made grants to individuals, over half were not able to provide a figure for the number of Armed Forces children and young people who received funding in a typical year (52%) or provide an approximate total annual value of this funding (60%). Moreover, when asked about their monitoring practices, approximately two-fifths (39.1%) of the respondents did not record information on the number of individual Armed Forces children and young people they funded, the value of the funding they provided to individual Armed Forces children and young people, or both. The respondents' comments suggested one reason for this is that their current monitoring practices do not distinguish children and young people from their families more broadly.

Similar, but somewhat less pronounced, findings were discussed in relation to funding for organisations. Among the funders in DSC's survey who reported that they funded organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people, approximately one-third were not able to provide a figure for the number of organisations they funded (32.1%) or the value of funding provided to organisations in a typical year (35.7%). In addition, when asked about their monitoring practices, just over one-quarter (26.9%) of the respondents said that their organisation did not routinely collect data on the value of funding for organisations, the number of funding awards made or both.

Overall, these findings suggest that a notable proportion of funders do not routinely monitor two key aspects of their funding for Armed Forces children and young people: the number of individuals and/or organisations they funded in a typical year to support Armed Forces children and young people and the approximate annual value of this funding. This is important because consistently collecting and reporting this data would provide a foundation for more robust and comprehensive data sharing, which could help develop practitioners' understanding, inform policy work and support collaboration.

6.3 WHAT REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION DO FUNDERS OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS HAVE?

To better understand an important aspect of the conditions of the funding provided, DSC's survey asked the respondents to indicate whether the recipients of their funding were required to evaluate its success.

In the context of this report, the term 'evaluation' is broadly used to describe the processes by which organisations measure and demonstrate the success of their funded projects. This can be carried out through formal methods (e.g. through collecting data on the relevant outcomes before and after a project) or informal methods (e.g. through gathering feedback or testimonials from grantees).

As shown in figure 6.1, just under two-thirds (64.3%) of the survey respondents said they did require the organisations they funded to carry out an evaluation of the success of how the funding was used. On the other hand, just over one-third (35.7%) of the respondents reported that they did not require the organisations that received their funding to evaluate its success.

Figure 6.1



Note: There were 28 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

The respondents that required the recipients of their funding to evaluate its success were invited to provide further detail. An illustrative selection from the responses provided has been reproduced in box 6.1. As the examples show, many of the respondents described how they required the organisations they funded to carry out ongoing monitoring and reporting practices - such as the completion of grant feedback forms or grant reports - rather than requiring them to carry out specific evaluation practices or follow particular methodologies.

This interpretation of evaluation (as monitoring) by some of the respondents suggests that the extent to which the funders surveyed required their recipients to evaluate the success of their funding may be somewhat overstated. More in-depth research on funders' understanding of evaluation processes and the prevalence of different evaluation techniques would advance the findings here.

Box 6.1

Respondents' comments about whether they require recipients of funding to evaluate the success of the funding they receive

Six-monthly grant feedback reports are provided.

All grantees are required to undertake monitoring as part of their work and provide evidence of the impact of the funding. On some programmes, we additionally conduct internal or external evaluations.

All grants are subject to regular reporting, which is impact based.

Grant reports are required to release further funding.

No formal evaluation process is in place at present, but recipients are required to report on the use of the grant.

We look closely at the impact our funding has had against key performance indicators. However, it is likely that we will move towards requesting organisations to report more broadly on the social value of the work they are undertaking.

We require impact reports annually. In future years we may require a deeper dive into the social value the organisation delivers with our funding.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

6.4 WHAT ARE THE PERCEIVED BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO EVALUATION?

The respondents to DSC's survey were asked to explain any of the barriers - as well as any of the things that help - with respect to evaluating the success of their funding to support Armed Forces children and young people. Looking first at the barriers, an illustrative selection from the responses provided has been reproduced in box 6.2. Answers included limited capacity (time and resources), low participation or engagement from the organisations funded, and a lack of knowledge among funded organisations about the best evaluation methods to use.

Box 6.2

Respondents' comments on barriers to evaluating the success of funding

Capacity to evaluate, buy-in from recipients to participate in the evaluation, and finances.

The challenge of capturing real change in life circumstances.

Feedback is not naturally given. You have to chase for the information.

For funding to organisations – having to chase reports. There are often issues if staff members have left.

Our partners have differing levels of understanding and competency in regard to impact reporting.

If the student leaves the school mid-term.

Staff resources to fully evaluate the impact and social value.

These are very small amounts for most of our charities and it would be unnecessarily onerous for them to provide significant evaluation for the amount they receive.

We do not expect our applicants to evaluate their projects beyond simple monitoring.

While it is improving, organisations frequently do not have recognised impact measurement tools; this is especially the case on localised projects.

Not all organisations provide the same charitable support or activities so comparative analysis is more qualitative.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

Barriers to the evaluation of funding were also covered in DSC's interviews with representatives from organisations that funded support for Armed Forces children and young people. Similar themes emerged in the interviewees' comments; a selection of extracts from the interviews has been reproduced in box 6.3.

Box 6.3

Interviewees' comments on barriers to evaluating the success of funding

It's a big ask to ask volunteers to collect data. We are looking at ways to increase data collection [by making it] easier and more timely. It's a key challenge, especially with volunteers leaving and joining.

We are a bit 'hit and miss' on evaluation because we're short staffed and growing quickly - these have been barriers to evaluation.

It's challenging to gather [data] - people or schools just haven't sent things back ... It's frustrating when you've given a school a lot of money and they don't respond. That's the trickiest thing.

It's extremely difficult on the side of grants to individuals. How do you measure an individual grant's success? The impact of a cooker [might be] enormous to one individual, but to someone else it might not be.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

With respect to what can help with evaluation, the examples provided by the respondents included allowing the recipients of funding to define the parameters of the evaluation, using more standardised tools in the evaluation process and working with other organisations to improve understanding of best practice. To illustrate the range of responses provided, a selection of the respondents' comments has been reproduced in box 6.4.

Box 6.4

Respondents' comments on what helps in evaluating the success of funding

[The] evaluation [method] is set by the organisation rather than the charity, so we let them tell us how they will measure the impact and ask them to report on that.

Regular contact with delivery organisations.

Tools that rate the impact, such as a wellbeing tool.

We have a programme of visits to beneficiary organisations by the trustees and the clerk to the charity.

We have embarked on a collaborative improvement project with our funded delivery partners to raise the bar on understanding best practice in evaluation and monitoring.

We use a survey with our families.

Written reports from the welfare support staff.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

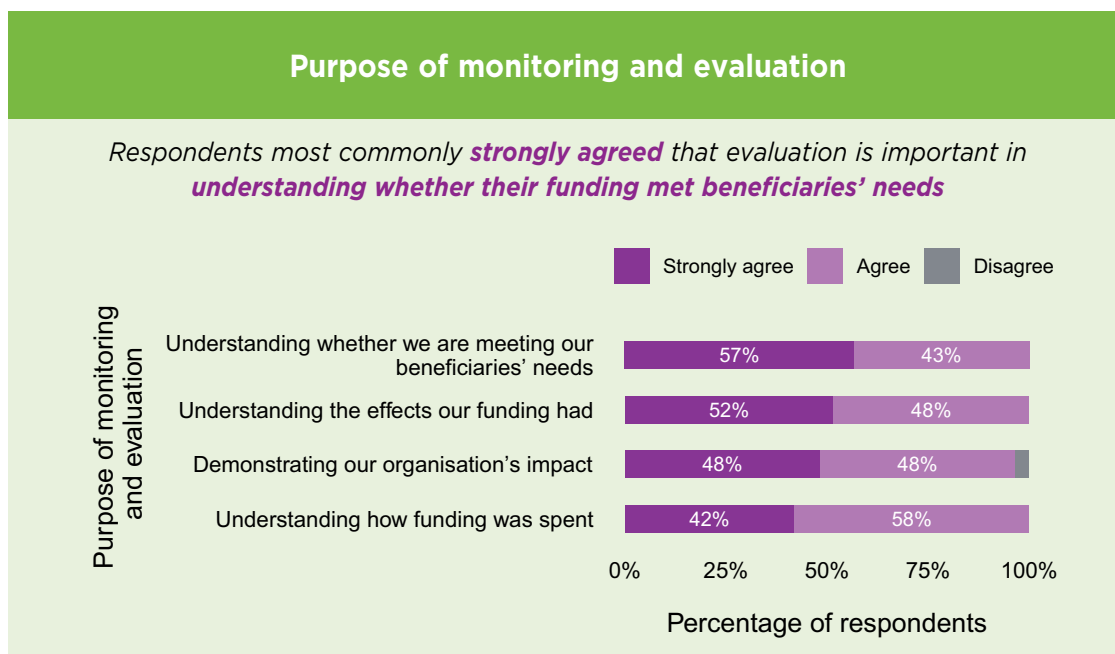
6.5 WHAT ARE THE PERCEIVED PURPOSES OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION?

To better understand how funders perceived the purposes of monitoring and evaluation, DSC’s survey invited the respondents to indicate how far they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

- Evaluation is important in understanding whether we are meeting our beneficiaries’ needs.
- Evaluation is important in understanding the effects our funding had.
- Evaluation is important in demonstrating our organisation’s impact.
- Evaluation is important in understanding how funding was spent.

As shown in figure 6.2, out of these statements, the respondents most commonly strongly agreed that evaluation is important in providing an understanding of whether their funding is meeting the needs of their beneficiaries (57%). Meanwhile, approximately half of the respondents strongly agreed that evaluation is important in understanding the effects of their funding (52%) and demonstrating their organisation’s impact (48%). The respondents least commonly strongly agreed (but overall still agreed) that evaluation is important in understanding how funding was spent (42%).

Figure 6.2



Note: There were a minimum of 29 and a maximum of 31 responses to the multiple parts of this question. Percentages below ten are not shown for reasons of space.

CHAPTER SEVEN

What is the role of collaboration?



7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide insights into the role that collaboration plays in the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people, including the types of organisation funders collaborate with, and funders' perceptions of collaboration, and the potential barriers and enablers to collaborating.

This chapter draws primarily on data from the Directory of Social Change (DSC)'s survey of funders to answer the following research questions:

- To what extent do funders collaborate?

- Which types of organisation do funders collaborate with?
- How much awareness of potential collaborators do funders have?
- How easy is it for funders to engage with potential collaborators?
- What are the effects of collaboration on organisations' achievements?
- What are the barriers and enablers to collaboration?
- What are funders' perceptions of the almonisation process?

The chapter also draws on DSC's interviews with funders and stakeholders, and a series of case studies are presented throughout the chapter to provide additional insights.

In line with the approach taken in other chapters, the survey data appears in green boxes, the interview quotes are shown in orange boxes and the case study content is identified in purple boxes.

7.2 TO WHAT EXTENT DO FUNDERS COLLABORATE?

DSC's survey listed a range of types of organisation that the survey respondents might have collaborated with. The respondents were invited to indicate which, if any, of the organisation types they had collaborated with in order to provide funding that supported Armed Forces children and young people.

Overall, around three-fifths (61.5%) of the survey respondents had collaborated with one or more other organisation specifically to provide funding for Armed Forces children and young people. This number is lower than has been found in DSC's other recent research with Armed Forces charities that support families (Howarth et al., 2021) and may reflect the specific focus here on providing funding, as opposed to other services or types of support, the focus on Armed Forces children and young people, or a combination of these two factors.

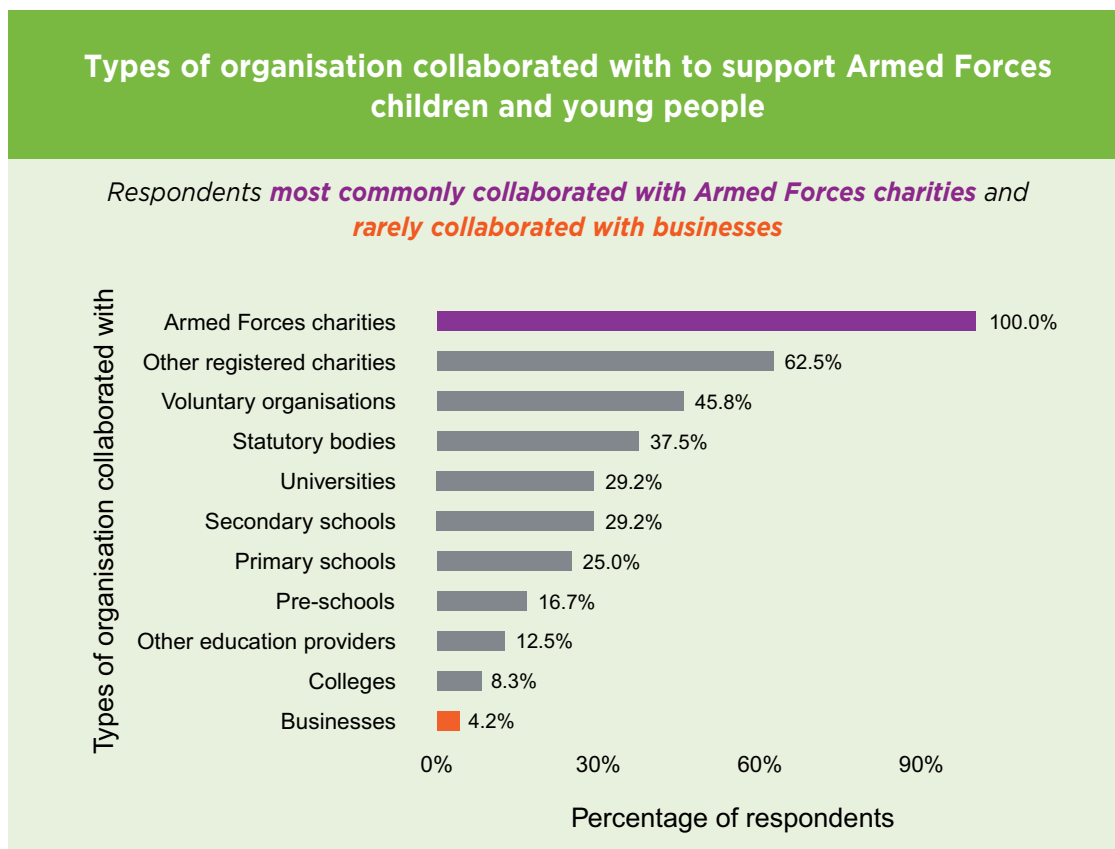
7.3 WHICH TYPES OF ORGANISATION DO FUNDERS COLLABORATE WITH?

As shown in figure 7.1, by a notable margin, the type of organisation that the survey respondents most commonly collaborated with was Armed Forces charities: all of the survey respondents collaborated with Armed Forces charities. This was followed by collaboration with other registered charities (non-Armed Forces), which was reported by almost two-thirds (62.5%) of the respondents, and voluntary organisations (e.g. community interest groups), which was reported by close to half (45.8%) of the respondents. More than one-third (37.5%) of the respondents indicated that they partnered with statutory bodies (e.g. local authorities, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) or the NHS) to fund support for Armed Forces children and young people.

When educational institutions were broken down into specific types, the respondents most commonly collaborated with universities (29.2%) and secondary schools (29.2%), and least commonly collaborated with colleges (8.3%). However, overall, almost half (48.5%, not

shown in figure 7.1) of the survey respondents partnered with one or more of the types of educational provider included in figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1



Note: There were 24 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer). Respondents could select more than one of the responses to this question; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100%.

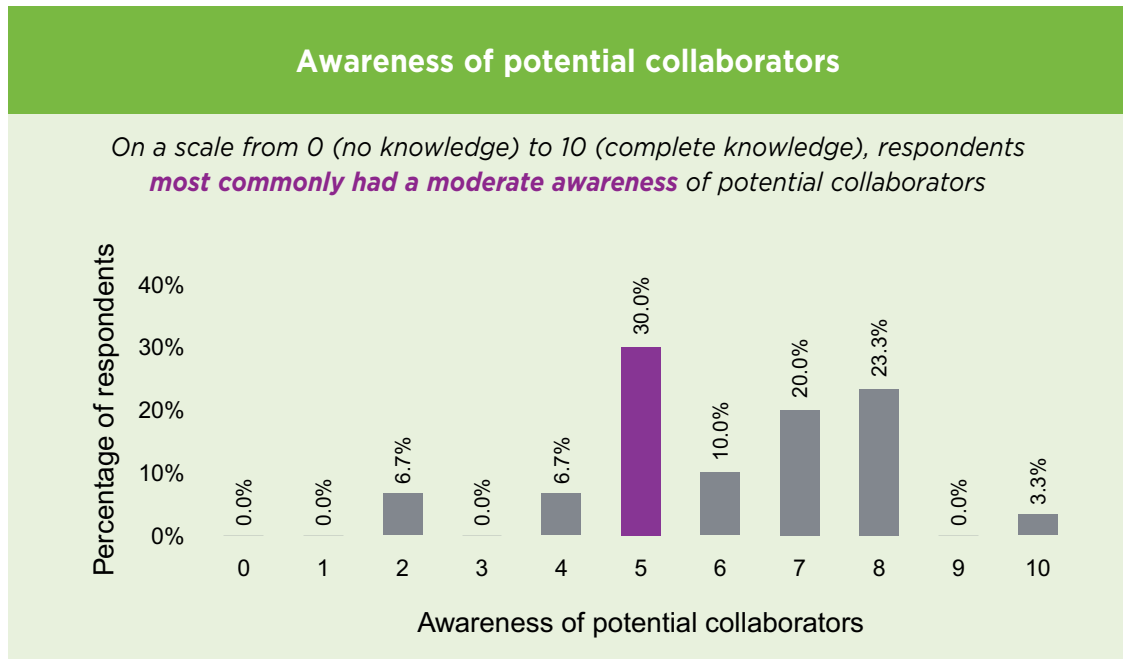
7.4 HOW MUCH AWARENESS OF POTENTIAL COLLABORATORS DO FUNDERS HAVE?

DSC's survey asked the respondents to rate their awareness of potential collaborators in providing funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people on a scale ranging from 0 (no knowledge) to 10 (complete knowledge). As shown in figure 7.2, the respondents most commonly (30.0%) indicated that they had a moderate knowledge of potential collaborators (i.e. a 5 on the scale).

More than half (56.6%) of the respondents rated their awareness of potential collaborators as higher than moderate. Indeed, the (mean) average rating was 6 out of 10, slightly above moderate awareness. Meanwhile, a notable minority (13.4%) of the respondents ranked their awareness of potential collaborators as a 4 or lower. This means that, overall, just over two-

fifths (43.4%) of the respondents had a moderate or lower awareness of potential collaborators. These results suggest considerable room to grow funders' awareness of potential collaborators, indicating that further work within the sector to improve knowledge around collaboration could have a positive effect.

Figure 7.2



Note: There were 30 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

To help illuminate where interventions to improve knowledge may be best directed, DSC's researchers undertook additional analyses to better understand whether the awareness of potential collaborators differed, on average, between different types of organisation. It is important to note that some of the groups compared below are statistically very small (N=2). Nevertheless, these analyses showed that, on average, the awareness of potential collaborators was:

- **similar** among specialist and non-specialist funders;
- **similar** among funders with differing Service affiliations;
- **higher** (greater awareness) among Armed Forces charities than non-Armed Forces charities;
- **lower** (lesser awareness) among regimental charities than non-regimental charities;
- **higher** (greater awareness) among large charities (annual incomes of between £5 million and £100 million) than upper-medium charities (annual incomes of between £500,000 and £5 million) and lower-medium charities (annual incomes of between £100,000 and £500,000).

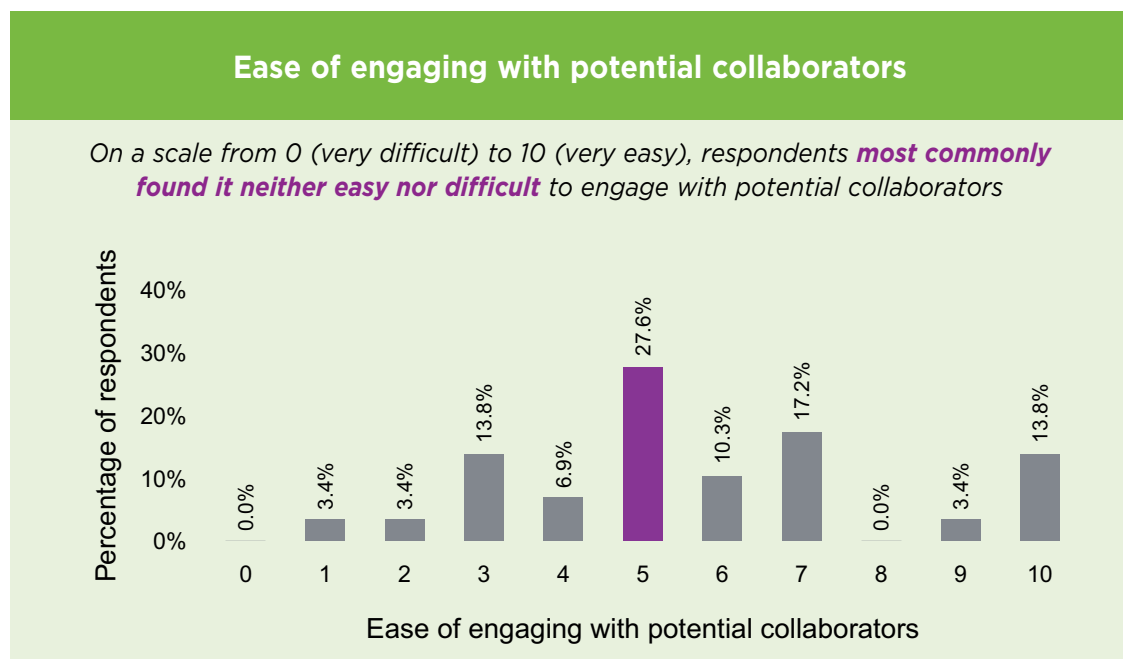
7.5 HOW EASY IS IT FOR FUNDERS TO ENGAGE WITH POTENTIAL COLLABORATORS?

DSC's survey also asked the respondents to rate their ease of engaging with potential collaborators in providing funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people on a scale ranging from 0 (very difficult) to 10 (very easy). As can be seen in figure 7.3, the respondents most commonly (27.6%) stated that it was neither easy nor difficult to engage with potential collaborators (i.e. a 5 on the scale), but there was evidence of polarised experiences among funders.

Close to half (44.7%) of the respondents rated their ease of engaging with potential collaborators towards the easier end of the scale (i.e. as higher than 5). Indeed, the (mean) average ease of engaging with potential collaborators was 6 out of 10. Meanwhile, just over one-quarter (27.5%) of the respondents rated their ease of engaging with potential collaborators towards the more difficult end of the scale (i.e. lower than 5).

Overall, the results suggest that for the majority of funders, there is the potential to improve the ease of engaging with potential collaborators. This points to the potential for the sector to make collaboration easier by breaking down the barriers to collaboration and enhancing factors that help with collaboration (see section 7.7).

Figure 7.3



Note: There were 29 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer).

To help illuminate whether any specific types of funder may benefit to a greater or lesser extent from making collaboration easier, DSC's researchers undertook additional analyses to

better understand the relationship between the ease of engaging with potential collaborators and other key characteristics of organisations.

It is important to note that some of the groups compared below are statistically very small (N=2). Nevertheless, these analyses showed that, on average, ease of engaging with potential collaborators was:

- rated **lower** (more difficult) among respondents who said they did not partner with other organisations;
- rated **lower** (more difficult) among specialist child-focused funders than non-specialist funders;
- rated **lower** (more difficult) among Armed Forces charities than non-Armed Forces charities;
- rated **higher** (easier) among large charities (annual incomes of between £5 million and £100 million), upper-medium charities (annual incomes of between £500,000 and £5 million) and lower-medium charities (annual incomes of between £100,000 and £500,000) than small charities (annual incomes of between £10,000 and £100,000);
- rated **somewhat higher** (easier) among Royal Navy and Royal Marines charities and British Army charities than among tri-Service charities;
- rated **similarly** among regimental and non-regimental charities.

7.6 WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF COLLABORATION ON ORGANISATIONS' ACHIEVEMENTS?

To better understand respondents' perspectives on the impacts or outcomes of collaboration, DSC's survey asked the respondents to indicate how far they agreed or disagreed that collaboration enabled their organisation to achieve things that it would not achieve alone.

As shown in figure 7.4, in response, a clear majority (65.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed that collaboration enabled them to achieve more than could be achieved alone, and an additional one-quarter (24.1%) of the respondents stated that they agreed with the statement. Only a minority (10.3%) of the funders surveyed said they disagreed that collaboration enabled their organisation to achieve things that it would not achieve alone (none of the respondents strongly disagreed).

Analysis of the relationship between these responses and other survey responses shows that, compared to those who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement above, funders who disagreed were notably more likely to not collaborate with other organisations. They also, on average, rated engaging with potential collaborators as more difficult (i.e. a higher value on the scale; see section 7.5).

Figure 7.4



Note: There were 29 responses to this question (not including those reporting an 'other' answer). The percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

The benefits of collaboration were a theme in DSC's conversations with the interviewees. A sample of extracts from interviewees' responses, included in box 7.1, provide some insights into the perceived benefits of collaboration, including using resources more efficiently, limiting duplication, sharing skills and expertise, and making access to support easier for beneficiaries.

Box 7.1

Interviewees' comments on the benefits of collaboration

The obvious advantage is that the more you collaborate, the more you are maximising your money and spending by covering the cost of resources together. There are not many disadvantages - to me, it can only benefit the families if we all come together. I can't see any way that it wouldn't.

Collaboration is good for accessing a range of skills that we don't have in-house.

An advantage of collaboration is being able to partner with people who are better at supporting a particular need. It's better to partner with them and deliver through them than to do it ourselves. We have quite a broad remit covering a range of different needs ... and children and young people is a small part of our beneficiary group so it works better for us to partner than to try and do everything in-house.

We've taken great note of the Andrew Selous report *Living in Our Shoes* [Walker et al., 2020], which very much encourages collaborative working. It's a crowded space with all the different organisations that can help. So for the Service family, if you can collaborate and thereby make it less confusing for the family then that ultimately helps the beneficiary.

[Partnership] helped to limit duplication. Service children is a very topical area so we're trying to help limit the risk of all charities spending on the same topical issues that have already been covered or are being worked on elsewhere.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

7.7 WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO COLLABORATION?

To help develop an understanding of funders' perceived barriers (the things that prevent collaboration) and enablers (the things that help collaboration), the survey respondents were invited to provide details of what prevents and what helps them to collaborate - with a particular focus on collaboration in support of Armed Forces children and young people.

Looking first at the barriers to collaboration, themes occurring among the responses provided include the misalignment of charitable objects, poor knowledge of potential partners and a lack of opportunities to network. An illustrative selection from the responses provided has been reproduced in box 7.2.

Box 7.2

Survey respondents' comments on barriers to collaboration

[It is] harder to collaborate with statutory organisations [as they] tend to prefer umbrella organisations to specialists. [It is] harder to ensure the right collaborations with mainstream organisations and charities.

[Barriers include not having] knowledge of other funders, alignment of objects and shared strategy.

[Barriers include] lack of local forums and networks, paucity of local leaders willing to cohere and help align effort.

Organisations have their own idea of what they wish to spend their donations on and how it can help children, which may not comply with our charter.

[Barriers include] poor knowledge of non-military charities and agencies.

[Barriers include] variation in regional services.

We are a small independent charity foundation, so it is not in our charter and not necessarily good value in terms of time to try and collaborate.

[Barriers include] where their vision does not match ours.

[Barriers include] year-on-year funding only. Even when a project is proving to be impactful.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

DSC's conversations with interviewees offered insights into the barriers to collaboration they experienced. Some of the themes discussed by the interviewees were competition in the sector, restrictive charitable objects, and a lack of time or resources. A selection of extracts from DSC's interviews has been reproduced in box 7.3.

Box 7.3

Interviewees' comments on barriers to collaboration

The concept of funders coming together to focus on collaborative goals is a challenge, personally speaking. I think the principle is good but, from my experience, some charities have to justify their spending and they don't want to get involved with collaborative work because from an outsider or marketing perspective, collaborative work may water down the impact that they're having with their own funding.

There's a sense of threat to the sector and competition might be a factor in their reluctance to collaborate.

Sometimes people can be a bit protective of their area of expertise, but ... meeting face to face has helped to forge those relationships. Going in at the right level can also help: for example, we've spoken to organisations locally, but if they're a national organisation, then, perhaps, we will speak to their central office.

Everyone being in busy organisations can make it difficult to bring good ideas to fruition and maintain enthusiasm.

A barrier can be that they have very definite charitable aims and they're not willing to broaden them.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

Turning now to the things that helped survey respondents to collaborate, some themes among the responses were access to networking opportunities via membership of forums or umbrella organisations, and having a good knowledge of the funding landscape. An illustrative selection from the responses provided has been reproduced in box 7.4.

Box 7.4

Respondents' comments on what helps with collaboration

Communication, open partnership working.

Attending meetings and briefings.

Established local networks and forums, [and] local champions and leaders who have signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant.

Knowledge of the charity landscape.

Membership of Cobseo [the Confederation of Service Charities].

Organisations that have a link with us or understand what we do and organisations that offer the funds without strings attached.

The Educational Trusts' Forum is great for working with other charities to support individual Service children.

We find the families' federations [Army Families Federation, Naval Families Federation and RAF Families Federation] and SCiP [the Service Children's Progression Alliance] to be very helpful in understanding the sector and in identifying positive collaborators.

Survey respondents

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

7.8 WHAT ARE FUNDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ALMONISATION PROCESS?

Almonisation is a term that is widely used in the Armed Forces charity sector. It describes the process whereby large welfare charities – such as the Royal British Legion, Poppyscotland and SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity – undertake an assessment of beneficiaries' needs (through their case workers) and then use a centralised system (called the Casework Management System, or Mosaic) to connect those beneficiaries with one or more organisations that can fund the support they require.

Several interviewees spoke about almonisation in the context of collaborative opportunities. Interviewees shared a mixture of positive and negative perceptions of the almonisation process. The reported benefits of almonisation included: making the process of checking eligibility criteria easier, presenting 'good collaboration' opportunities, and helping to provide a more holistic model of support to Armed Forces children and young people.

However, some organisations noted areas in which they felt the almonisation process could be improved. Some of the areas for improvement that were brought to DSC's attention by the interviewees were the need to more actively involve smaller charities in conversations and the need to increase case-working organisations' knowledge of the work that charities in the system carry out or are specialists in.

A selection of extracts from the interviews has been provided in box 7.5.

Box 7.5

Interviewees' positive and negative experiences of almonisation

It makes it easier to give money to families who have come through the almonisation process because [of] the checks put in place through the CMS [case management system, Mosaic].

We call it almonisation in the sector, which derives from the old giving of alms. Each family gets a package of support because we do the children's piece, and another charity will do the fridge-freezer, or this or that. There's a lot of good collaboration on the direct support to families [grants to individuals] – that works really well. I think there's less collaboration around what we're providing in the broader sense – for example, the resources that we and other organisations produce have been very similar – and there could be more collaboration on that. It would be great if there was a central place for schools and communities to come and ask for funding and we all collaborated on it – like with the almonisation process for individuals. It would make it easier for the school to apply for one place, and easier for us.

We've done quite a lot of work with the case management system: often the children's needs aren't identified ... but we've managed to get it so that if there are children involved, we automatically get tagged in - we can then explore what might be impacting the children and what their needs are.

The [case management] system seems to work quite well from the family perspective, [as it gives] a holistic overview of their situation and [allows families to] reach out to lots of people for support through one mechanism. But, as a small charity, I don't feel like we're working together with the organisations: we are part of a process but not a conversation ... It should be 'here's a case' and then discuss it - it doesn't feel like we're working collaboratively.

Organisations such as SSAFA and Poppyscotland are becoming more aware of [us] over time; the policy team continue to make sure [we] are known within those circles but ... there is more work to be done on ensuring there is knowledge of the work we are doing.

Interviewees

Note: Quotes are for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

The case study below provides an example of an Armed Forces charity affiliated with a particular Service branch, in this case the British Army. ABF - The Soldiers' Charity provides support to Armed Forces children and young people. This case study provides a good example of engagement with the almonisation (or casework) system to identify beneficiaries and to deliver funding which supports Armed Forces children and young people.

Case study: ABF - The Soldiers' Charity

ABF - The Soldiers' Charity was established in 1944 to support soldiers and their families in the aftermath of the Second World War (ABF - The Soldiers' Charity, 2020). The charity has since become one of the largest Armed Forces welfare charities by income (Cole et al., 2020). In the most recent financial year, it provided £2.8 million in grants to over 3,000 individuals and £3.4 million in funding for organisations (ABF - The Soldiers' Charity, 2022, pp. 26 and 40).

Alongside its support for the Armed Forces community more broadly, ABF - The Soldiers' Charity provides funding intended specifically to support Armed Forces children and young people, through both grants to individuals and funding for organisations. The charity awards grants to the children of serving and ex-Service personnel until they reach independence; this approach to defining eligible beneficiaries means that children from Service families can still be supported into

adulthood in certain circumstances – for example, where the young adult has learning difficulties that require additional support.

Through its grants to individuals, ABF – The Soldiers’ Charity takes a purposefully broad approach to what it can fund, reacting to the needs of Armed Forces children and young people. The charity relies on case-working organisations such as the Royal British Legion and SSAFA to approach it with information on individuals and their needs, and it also receives referrals from associations and regimental charities. While young people do sometimes contact ABF – The Soldiers’ Charity directly, one potential difficulty in accessing support for children and young people can be reliance on the parent or carer to identify a need and seek support.

ABF – The Soldiers’ Charity’s grants to Armed Forces children and young people are usually of between £500 and £10,000 and, in a typical year, amount to a total of £115,000. Previous examples of funding include psychological and educational assessments for children suffering following bereavement or parental divorce; adapting homes for children with additional needs, disabilities or reduced mobility; and bursaries for private education if a child’s needs cannot be met in a mainstream school.

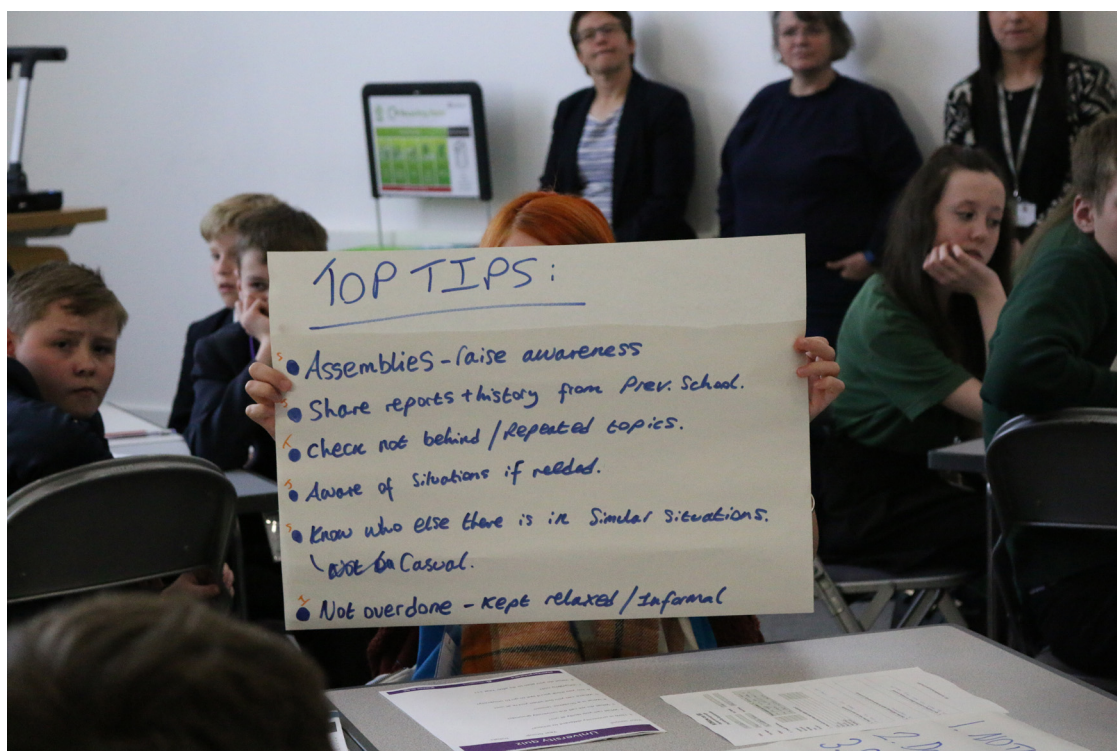
With respect to funding for organisations to support Armed Forces children and young people, the charity typically provides £70,000 in total over a financial year, ranging from £3,500 to £30,000 for each individual grant. In the past, ABF – The Soldiers’ Charity has provided funding for charities which specialise in support for Armed Forces children, such as Reading Force and Scotty’s Little Soldiers.

The charity also develops funding packages for organisations – such as Home-Start UK, the NSPCC and the Rainbow Trust – that deliver support to Armed Forces children and young people as part of their wider work. ABF – The Soldiers’ Charity funds these organisations with the intention that its funding can and will be used to support some Armed Forces children and young people – as must be demonstrated in grant applications – but the charity acknowledges that this funding may also support other non-Armed Forces children more broadly. For example, an organisation may provide a school sensory room which is used by Armed Forces children and other pupils at the school.

Note: Most of the information in this case study was gathered via interviews and/or correspondence with representatives from the ABF – The Soldiers’ Charity in addition to publicly available information.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusions



8.1 INTRODUCTION

This report has provided the first comprehensive overview of the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people in the UK. This final chapter revisits the main questions posed for this research, providing conclusions in relation to the key findings. It also sets out recommendations for the future, including priorities for further research.

8.2 HOW MANY FUNDERS ARE THERE?

There are at least 69 organisations that fund support for Armed Forces children and young people but very few organisations (N=7) specialise in this.

Employing a multifaceted methodology, the Directory of Social Change (DSC) identified 69 organisations with evidence of providing funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people. They were mostly Armed Forces charities but also included charities with more general charitable purposes and other types of organisation like businesses and social enterprises.

To provide some insights as to whether this number of funders can be considered a lot or a little, it may be helpful to put this finding into context of DSC's existing data on the wider Armed Forces charity sector. There are 44 Armed Forces charities (including the specialist child-focused funders) among the 69 funders DSC identified in this report, which represent just 2.5% of all Armed Forces charities (N=1,755) and just 5.2% of all grant-making Armed Forces charities (N=848, as defined in the 'Methodology' section on page xxi).

Furthermore, only 10% of the organisations identified by DSC as funding support for Armed Forces children and young people were specialist child-focused funders. In other words, only one in every ten of the identified funders had a central focus on funding support for Armed Forces children and young people. Almost all these specialist child-focused funders were Armed Forces charities, and they represent less than 0.01% of all Armed Forces charities.

This finding aligns with DSC's previous research on Armed Forces charities. Notably, similar findings have emerged in DSC's *Focus On* series, which explored topics of charitable support for the Armed Forces community in the areas such as mental health, education, housing, physical health and criminal justice. Throughout this series, DSC consistently found very small pockets of specialist provision across different areas of support.

Given that such a high proportion (over three-quarters) of serving Armed Forces families have children (MOD, 2022b; this figure is currently unknown for ex-Service families), the 69 organisations identified by DSC could be considered a relatively low number of funders. Although, ultimately, this depends on how far the funding provided meets the needs of Armed Forces children and young people – and whether having more funders, as opposed to more funding, would better meet their needs.

Identifying the organisations that fund support for Armed Forces children and young people was methodologically challenging. One of these challenges was that many potential funders identified by DSC's researchers could not be conclusively added to the funding landscape using publicly available information alone. Where necessary, DSC sought direct engagement with potential funders. However, not all of them responded: in particular, for 49 organisations that had evidence of support at the family level, it could not be confirmed whether they funded support for children and young people specifically. Therefore, the funding landscape may be larger than this research could identify.

As part of this research, DSC also identified two statutory funding streams that support Armed Forces children and young people – Service Pupil Premium (SPP) and the AF3 Fund – which feature in case studies in section 2.4.5. They have not been labelled as ‘funders’ in this report, as they are more complex systems with multiple organisations involved in their funding and management structures.

8.3 HOW MUCH FUNDING IS PROVIDED?

Survey respondents reported providing at least £8.6 million to support Armed Forces children and young people in a typical year. In practice, the amount of funding is likely to be higher because not all funders responded to the survey or shared this information.

At least £8.6 million is provided by funders to support Armed Forces children and young people in a typical financial year: DSC’s funder survey respondents stated they gave around £3.1 million to individuals (i.e. directly to Armed Forces children and young people or a parent or guardian on their behalf) and around £5.5 million to organisations that support Armed Forces children and young people.

These figures should be interpreted as low estimates of the total funding provided to support Armed Forces children and young people. This is because not all the funders responded to the survey, and not all of the survey respondents were able to provide a figure. Indeed, this data was available for only 28.6% of the funders that provided funding to individuals and 37.5% of the funders that supported organisations.

A significant proportion (39.1%) of survey respondents said that they did not gather data on the number of individuals and/or organisations they fund to support Armed Forces children and young people, the approximate value of this funding, or both. Outside the survey, DSC’s researchers conducted additional desk research and found that few of the funders featured in this report published such information in their annual reports and accounts or on their websites. This presents a barrier to a robust and comprehensive understanding of the amount of funding provided to support Armed Forces children and young people.

In terms of statutory funding, the Department for Education awarded £25 million in SPP funding in 2020/21, and the AF3 Fund will award £3 million throughout 2023 as outlined in the case studies in section 2.4.5 (Roberts et al., 2021; RAF Families Federation, 2022). As part of the research for this report, DSC’s researchers also spoke with local authority representatives and found that local authorities can play an integral part in the funding landscape by signposting, advising and distributing funding to schools and other local organisations. However, it was beyond the scope of this research to ascertain how much local authorities contribute to the funding landscape. In future research, it may be possible to more accurately pinpoint local authorities’ spending on funding for Armed Forces children and young people using freedom of information requests.

8.4 WHO AND WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

Generally, funders' eligibility criteria were quite broad and they could provide a wide range of funding, including but not limited to the areas of social and wellbeing support, mental health support and educational support.

This report found that funders' eligibility criteria for providing support were generally quite broad and flexible, particularly in regard to the geographical locations that they could serve and whether funders could support children and young people from serving or ex-Service families. However, there were instances where funders used stricter eligibility criteria in situations where support is in relation to specific beneficiary groups or needs, meaning that the overall amount of funding in the sector is restricted in its distribution. A key example of this is the 14 identified regimental charities, which, by definition, only award funding to support Armed Forces children and young people who have a connection to the regiment. This is not unique to Armed Forces charities' support for children and young people but a characteristic of the sector more broadly.

DSC's researchers investigated some key aspects of funders' eligibility criteria and found that, with the exception of Armed Forces charities (three-fifths of which were affiliated with a specific Service branch), the remaining funders could almost all provide tri-Service support (i.e. to children and young people from Royal Navy and Royal Marines families, British Army families or Royal Air Force families). The typical age range at which funders could offer support generally fell between birth and 18 or 25 years of age.

Some interviewees emphasised that their organisations took a flexible approach to eligibility criteria where possible. For example, some interviewees explained that their age-range criteria could vary to consider factors such as beneficiaries' level of independence.

As described in chapter 1, Armed Forces children and young people can have unique experiences arising from their life in the Armed Forces community. While not all Armed Forces children and young people face challenges, there can be particular times at which support is required. DSC's survey showed that funding support was most commonly provided in relation to Armed Forces children and young people losing a serving family member and least commonly provided in relation to accessing primary or secondary education.

Turning to what funding can be used for, DSC's survey found that, across both funding to individuals and funding for organisations, social and wellbeing support (which included bereavement support such as professional services or gifts, and travel to visit family members or friends) was more commonly funded than educational support and mental health support. A substantial proportion of respondents funded a breadth of support which encompassed the three areas DSC asked about (social and wellbeing, educational and mental health support) to both individuals (37.5%) and organisations (45.5%).

Survey respondents were also asked about the characteristics of their funding for organisations specifically. More than one-third (37.5%) of funders specified that their funding could not be used to cover organisations' core costs, such as administration, salaries for staff and governance costs. This is a particularly salient consideration at the present time as charities and voluntary sector organisations are experiencing and responding to the higher

costs associated with the current economic environment, such as increased energy bills (Charity Finance Group, 2022) and overheads such as offices, IT and rent (Howarth and Cole, 2023).

Additionally, more than half of the survey respondents provided mostly or only single-year funding, and just over one-quarter stated that they mostly or only provided one-off funding (where an organisation receives only one grant for a particular programme or project). As highlighted in an interview and by one of the schools covered in a case study, this can have implications for the longer-term sustainability of a given project or for staff retention and can make it difficult to plan for the future.

8.5 WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION?

There is scope to increase monitoring and evaluation practices among funders, as a substantial proportion of the survey respondents stated that they did not monitor key metrics of their funding for Armed Forces children and young people or require the organisations they funded to evaluate the success of this funding.

DSC's survey of funders and additional desk research highlighted that a substantial proportion of funders did not routinely monitor key aspects of their funding for Armed Forces children and young people. Notably, two important components of monitoring – collecting administrative data about the value of funding that is specifically intended to support Armed Forces children and young people and information about the number of organisations or individuals that receive funding – were reported by only a small number of funders.

These findings indicate that there is substantial scope for funders to expand their current monitoring practices to systematically collate key data with respect to their funding for Armed Forces children and young people. Due to their focus on the Armed Forces community, this may be easier to implement for Armed Forces charities than for non-Armed Forces charities. Nevertheless, support through detailed guidance and best practice could help all funders collect – and then voluntarily publish – this information.

'Evaluation' is a broad term used to describe how organisations measure and demonstrate the success of their funded projects, for example through collecting data on the relevant outcomes before and after a project, or gathering feedback or testimonials from grantees.

Just over one-third of the survey respondents did not require the organisations they funded to evaluate the success of that funding. This limits the depth of understanding of funders' impact and of what works – and to what extent – in terms of supporting beneficiaries. It is also important to note that the interpretation of the term 'evaluation' (as monitoring) by some of the respondents may indicate that the reported prevalence of evaluation is higher than is the case in practice.

These findings suggest significant scope for the funders of Armed Forces children and young people to increase the extent of their evaluation practices. Drawing on examples suggested by the respondents and interviewees, this could include removing current barriers to

evaluation (such as limited capacity, low participation or engagement from the organisations funded, and lack of knowledge) and enhancing enablers (such as greater autonomy in recipients' evaluations, use of more standardised evaluation tools, and working with other organisations to improve understanding of best practice).

8.6 WHAT IS THE ROLE OF COLLABORATION?

Collaboration to fund support for Armed Forces children and young people was widespread among the survey respondents. However, opportunities for collaboration could be extended as a significant minority of the survey respondents had a moderate or low awareness of potential collaborators or found it difficult to engage with them.

The results of DSC's funder survey suggested widespread collaboration among funders. The majority of the funders surveyed collaborated with another organisation in order to provide funding that specifically supported Armed Forces children and young people. However, some types of organisation were much more likely to be involved in collaboration than others - funders most commonly partnered with charities and, in particular, Armed Forces charities.

The overwhelming majority (89.6%) of the funders surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that collaboration enabled their organisation to achieve things that it would not achieve alone. Based on DSC's interviews with funders and stakeholders, the benefits of collaboration can include efficiency gains, accessing a wider range of skills, ensuring those best placed to give support are included, and improving beneficiaries' experience of an otherwise potentially confusing sector.

However, the funders had widely varying experiences of how easy it is to engage with potential collaborators, and these experiences were related to whether or not they indeed collaborated with other funders. Overall, the data suggests considerable scope to improve the perceived ease of engaging with potential collaborators. The types of organisation that, on average, find it more difficult to engage with potential partners were specialist child-focused funders, Armed Forces charities and smaller charities.

The comments provided by the survey respondents and the interviewees suggest that it would be possible to focus on removing the current barriers to collaboration to improve the extent and experience of collaborative work. These barriers include competition in the sector, restrictive or misaligned charitable objects or vision, a lack of time or resources, and a lack of opportunities to network.

There also remains considerable scope to grow funders' awareness of potential collaborators, as just over two-fifths (43.4%) of the funders surveyed rated their awareness as only moderate or below moderate. This could be encouraged through membership forums, umbrella organisations and access to networking events. To be most effective, this awareness-raising should be broad and inclusive, bringing together a range of funders. However, it is worth noting that raising awareness may be more impactful or important for the types of funder that had, on average, lower awareness - such as non-Armed Forces charities, non-regimental charities and smaller charities.

8.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the findings presented throughout this report and are aimed at umbrella organisations, forums and networks – such as the Service Children’s Progression (SCiP) Alliance.

8.7.1 Recommendation 1: Improve the quality of data on funders

Encourage and support funders to collect more specific data on their funding practices and share information using a centralised resource so as to overcome current limitations on the availability of information and inform policy, strategy and campaigns.

Approximately half of the organisations included in this report that funded support for Armed Forces children and young people (i.e. most of the organisations included in chapter 2) could not be identified as providing this support on the basis of publicly available data alone.

Moreover, other key information related to monitoring – on the total annual value of funding provided to support Armed Forces children and young people, the number of funding awards made and what the funding was spent on – was available for the specialist child-focused funders but typically was not provided by the non-specialist funders.

A centralised repository to which data can be submitted could bring together organisations’ data on their funding for Armed Forces children and young people. This would provide an opportunity for funders to voluntarily opt-in to sharing varying tiers of data: from whether Armed Forces children and young people have been supported through funding in the most recent financial year, to the number and value of the funding awards made and the needs they addressed. This would create the basis for a unique resource for monitoring, reviewing and influencing the provision of funding for Armed Forces children and young people.

Funders could be supported to contribute to this centralised repository through the provision of clear and detailed guidance that enables a level of standardisation in reporting. This could include providing a refined definition of what funding is relevant for inclusion in the repository, as well as best practices around the more detailed information about the funding, such as how to determine what needs that funding has addressed. Meanwhile, the participating funders’ commitment to gathering and sharing data related to funding for Armed Forces children and young people could be evidenced on funders’ websites, for example through a specific membership badge or quality mark.

The creation of such a repository could also provide a fundamental development in the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people, enabling relevant funding organisations to begin to better understand the scope and nature of the funding provided. Especially where the data could shed light on what is being funded and what needs are being addressed, this would help to inform policy, strategy and campaigns to strengthen statutory provision where appropriate (for example, where charities are supporting Armed Forces children and young people who have fallen through the gaps in statutory provision).

By revealing which needs are being addressed and to what extent, the repository could also help Armed Forces and non-Armed Forces charities collaborate by bringing together organisations that have a common focus on a particular need or area of support. For example, providing school-based support to children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage or therapeutic support for children and young people experiencing mental health difficulties.

Finally, it could provide the opportunity for umbrella organisations, forums and networks (such as the SCiP Alliance) to be leading examples in the Armed Forces charity sector more broadly, demonstrating the potential for collaboration to systematically improve data quality.

8.7.2 Recommendation 2: Extend the opportunities for collaboration

Capitalise on positive perceptions of collaboration by advancing the related infrastructure so that funders of Armed Forces children and young people can work together more efficiently and effectively.

Most of the funders surveyed agreed that collaboration enabled their organisation to achieve more than could be achieved alone, and interviewees highlighted a range of benefits, such as maximising impact and improving efficiency. Interviewees also highlighted that communication between funders; access to forums, meetings and networking events; and membership of umbrella bodies can enhance collaboration.

This report provides a foundation for further collaboration through the identification of funders that support Armed Forces children and young people. These organisations could be brought together into a formalised, funding-focused network to help them seek out potential partners, set funding priorities, share expertise and resources, and avoid duplication of effort. This would expand upon the existing collaborative networks in the sector, bringing together funders from a range of sectors and with varied focuses.

8.7.3 Recommendation 3: Improve the quality and extent of evaluation

Encourage funders to set aside funding for evaluation and generate resources to help funding recipients evaluate the success of their projects or programmes.

More than one-third of the funders that participated in DSC's survey did not require the organisations they funded to carry out evaluations into the success of their funding. Increasing the requirement for evaluation would expand funders' current knowledge of the impact of their funding and help them to understand any areas that require improvement. More widespread and higher-quality evaluation could lead to better evidence and increased understanding of what works for beneficiaries and why.

One barrier to evaluation can be knowledge of methods. Therefore, generating and sharing resources to assist funding recipients in evaluating the success of their programmes could help funders to help their grantees. These resources could include information on why

evaluation is important, methods that can be used in evaluation, examples of evaluations, and best practice.

It is important to recognise that the associated cost implications and resources required can present barriers to funders carrying out evaluation, as highlighted by the interviewees in DSC's research. Therefore, funders should be encouraged to consider ways to alleviate this burden on the organisations they fund – for example, by including funding specified for the purposes of evaluation as part of their standard package of funding, and by maintaining a focus on low-cost and low-resource-intensive evaluation methods.

8.7.4 Recommendation 4: Improve the ability to respond to future challenges

Continue to collect and share data on how the continually evolving socio-economic environment is affecting funders, as well as the individuals and organisations they fund.

This report provides the first comprehensive, evidence-based overview of the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people. The past few years have been a particularly turbulent period for organisations with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the unfolding cost-of-living crisis.

During the interviews, some organisations' representatives spoke about their changing priorities. For example, three charities had introduced crisis grants programmes for essential items such as household goods, clothing and food, and had noticed a sharp uptake in grant applications.

When DSC asked organisations to what extent they felt their income was sufficient to deliver a level of funding that met their objectives in relation to support for Armed Forces children and young people, almost all of the respondents that provided an answer said their organisation's income was adequate or sufficient.

However, the cost-of-living crisis is expected to continue to negatively affect living standards, with 'signs that [it] will leave a long-term mark on people's finances and health' (Brewer et al., 2023). Indeed, recent forecasts published by the Bank of England suggest that the UK economy may be in recession into 2024, alongside high interest rates and rising unemployment (Monetary Policy Committee, 2022).

These socio-economic pressures may result in more widespread and more complex needs among Armed Forces families and Armed Forces children and young people. In turn, there may be greater demand on charities and voluntary sector organisations that can support them – as has already been experienced by the wider Armed Forces charity sector (Howarth and Cole, 2023).

Meanwhile, charitable organisations themselves are facing multiple other pressures, including increased costs associated with delivering support (for example, the essential costs of energy and staff) and difficulties recruiting staff (Jemal et al., 2022). Moreover, recent research from the Charities Aid Foundation suggests that cost-of-living pressures are already reducing the percentage of the public donating to charity, and that approximately one-tenth

(12%) of a representative sample of the general public plan to scale back their charitable donations (CAF, 2022).

Some of the respondents stated that their organisation could, or intended to, increase the amount of support it provided due to its income being more than sufficient or flexible enough to respond to changing needs. While this report has provided an informative snapshot of the current funding landscape, it would be useful to carry out future research to assess how the current socio-economic pressures change demand for funding support from Armed Forces children and young people and the organisations that support them.

8.7.5 Recommendation 5: Undertake research with Armed Forces children and young people and their families

Fund and undertake further research that can draw on the experiences of Armed Forces children and young people - and their families - as recipients or potential beneficiaries of funding to deepen knowledge and inform funding strategies.

While it was beyond the scope of this project, future research around funding for Armed Forces children and young people could incorporate the perspectives of Armed Forces children and young people - and their families - themselves. A children's rights-based perspective 'emphasises the importance of children being able to express their views in all matters affecting them' (Hall, 2020, p. 9). As has been this approach in other areas of research, this recognises the contribution that Armed Forces children and young people can make to knowledge and practice as 'experts by experience' (Howarth et al., 2020, p. 6).

During the research for this report, DSC spoke with representatives from some organisations that have received funding - for example, schools and local authorities - about their experiences of accessing funding and the enablers and barriers they encountered in the process. Future research could explore the additional experiences and perspectives of Armed Forces children, young people and families. It could also investigate what their needs are - and if these needs have been addressed through the funding that has been provided to them or to the organisations they access for support (or, indeed, if no required funding has been provided). Further knowledge in such areas could contribute to strategic work regarding what funders could do better or differently to improve the experiences of and outcomes for Armed Forces children and young people.

Appendix

Table A.1 All funders identified by the Directory of Social Change as part of the funding landscape for Armed Forces children and young people (N=69).

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
Specialist child-focused funders (N=7)						
The Alexander Duckham Memorial Schools Trust	CCEW	Individuals	Royal Air Force	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	Recent grant to Reading Force (£10,000)
Armed Forces Education Trust	CCEW	Both	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	
Forces Children Scotland	Cross-border	Individuals	Tri-Service	Upper medium	Keyword search and published information	
Naval Children's Charity	Cross-border	Both	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Upper medium	Keyword search and published information	
Sailors' Children's Society	CCEW	Both	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Upper medium	Keyword search and published information	
Scotty's Little Soldiers	CCEW	Individuals	Tri-Service	Upper medium	Keyword search and published information	
Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru	Not applicable	Organisations	Tri-Service	Not applicable	Interviews with funders and stakeholders	

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
Armed Forces charities (N=38)						
ABF - The Soldiers' Charity	Cross-border	Both	British Army	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grants to Army Families Federation (£40,000) and Forces Children Scotland (£29,247)
Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Keyword search and published information	Recent grants to Forces Children Scotland (£74,235), Scotty's Little Soldiers (£60,000), Sailors' Children's Society (£55,000), Reading Force (£55,000 in two grants)
The Army Central Fund	CCEW	Organisations	British Army	Upper medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Army Families Federation (£491,042)
The Army Dependants' Trust	CCEW	Both	British Army	Upper medium	Direct communication with funder	
The Brigade of Gurkhas Education and Welfare Fund	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	
The British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS)	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	
The Coldstream Guards Charitable Fund	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
Essex Yeomanry Association	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Micro	Direct communication with funder	
Felix Fund - The Bomb Disposal Charity	CCEW	Both	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Direct communication with funder	
The Grenadier Guards Charity	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Lower medium	Direct communication with funder	
The Household Cavalry Foundation	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	
Intelligence Corps Association	CCEW	Both	British Army	Upper medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Scotty's Little Soldiers (£598)
Lest We Forget Association	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Scotty's Little Soldiers (£20,450)
Lloyd's Patriotic Fund	CCEW	Both	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	Recent grant to Army Families Federation (£10,000)
Lord Kitchener National Memorial Fund	CCEW	Individuals	Tri-Service	Small	Keyword search and published information	
The MacRobert Trust	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Upper medium	Information in accounts of specialists	
Mrs M H Allen Trust	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Small	Interviews with funders and stakeholders	

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Charity	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Upper medium	Keyword search and published information	
PoppyScotland	OSCR	Individuals	Tri-Service	Large	Direct communication with funder	
Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Direct communication with funder	
The REME Charity	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Upper medium	Direct communication with funder	
The Rifles Benevolent Trust	CCEW	Both	British Army	Upper medium	Direct communication with funder	
The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund	Cross-border	Organisations	Royal Air Force	Large	Keyword search and published information	Recent grants to Scotty's Little Soldiers (£6,000)
The Royal Armoured Corps Memorial Trust	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Small	Keyword search and published information	
The Royal British Legion	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Super major	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Reading Force (£13,035)
Royal Marines Association - The Royal Marines Charity	Cross-border	Both	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Upper medium	Interviews with funders and stakeholders	
The Royal Military Police Central Benevolent Fund	CCEW	Individuals	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Direct communication with funder	

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
The Royal Naval Benevolent Society for Officers	CCEW	Individuals	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Upper medium	Keyword search and published information	
The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (Grand Fleet and Kindred Funds)	CCEW	Individuals	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Large	Direct communication with funder	
The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity	Cross-border	Both	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grants to Naval Children's Charity (£720,000), Sailors' Children's Society (£253,450) and Scotty's Little Soldiers (£15,000)
The Scots Guards Charity	Cross-border	Individuals	British Army	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	
The Special Air Service Regimental Association	CCEW	Individuals	British Army	Lower medium	Direct communication with funder	
Special Boat Service Association	CCEW	Individuals	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Upper medium	Keyword search and published information	
SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity	Cross-border	Both	Tri-Service	Large	Interviews with funders and stakeholders	
Staffordshire United Services Aid Fund	CCEW	Individuals	Tri-Service	Small	Direct communication with funder	

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
The Veterans' Foundation	Cross-border	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Keyword search and published information	Recent grants to Scotty's Little Soldiers (£77,658), Forces Children Scotland (£15,000), Reading Force (£25,000 in two grants)
Welsh Guards Charity	CCEW	Both	British Army	Lower medium	Direct communication with funder	
Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust	CCEW	Individuals	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	
Non-Armed Forces charities (N=18)						
Bauer Radio's Cash for Kids Charities	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
The British and Foreign School Society	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Upper medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Forces Children Scotland (£20,000)
The Corporation of Trinity House of Deptford Strond	CCEW	Organisations	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grants to Sailors' Children's Society (£148,000) and Naval Children's Charity (£47,300)
Dr and Mrs J D Olav Kerr Charitable Trust No. 2	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Small	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
The Federation of Groundwork Trusts	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grants to Scotty's Little Soldiers (£7,000) and Forces Children Scotland (£1,000)
Foundation Scotland	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Forces Children Scotland (£5,000)
The George and Esme Pollitzer Charitable Settlement	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Keyword search and published information	
The Grocers' Charity	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Direct communication with funder	
James T Howat Charitable Trust	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
The James Weir Foundation	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
Mark Mckee Trust	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Micro	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
New Park Educational Trust Limited	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	CCEW	Organisations	Tri-Service	Large	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Forces Children Scotland (£30,000)
Pleasance Trust	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Small	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
Pump House Trust	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Small	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
Scottish Children's Lottery Trust	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Upper medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
The Seafarers' Charity	CCEW	Organisations	Royal Navy and Royal Marines	Upper medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grants to Sailors' Children's Society (£115,000) and Naval Children's Charity (£100,000)
The W M Mann Foundation	OSCR	Organisations	Tri-Service	Lower medium	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
Businesses, social enterprises and other types of organisation (N=6)						
Annington Homes and Annington Trust	Not applicable	Organisations	Tri-Service	Not applicable	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grants to Scotty's Little Soldiers (£50,000), Army Families Federation (£50,000) and Reading Force (£25,000)

Funder name	Regulator	Grants to	Service affiliation	Charity size	Identified through	Example grants to specialist organisations
Bonnet-Makers and Dyers of Glasgow	Not applicable	Organisations	Tri-Service	Not applicable	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Forces Children Scotland (£5,000)
Chiene and Tait	Not applicable	Organisations	Tri-Service	Not applicable	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Forces Children Scotland (£2,000)
Greenwich Hospital	Not applicable	Both	Tri-Service	Not applicable	Keyword search and published information	
National Lottery Awards for All Scotland	Not applicable	Organisations	Tri-Service	Not applicable	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Previous grant to Forces Children Scotland
The National Lottery Community Fund	Not applicable	Organisations	Tri-Service	Not applicable	Information in accounts of specialist organisations	Recent grant to Forces Children Scotland (£25,400)

Note: CCEW: Charity Commission for England and Wales; OSCR: Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Publicly available data on grant-making to individuals, organisations or both has been supplemented with survey data. Funders could be identified through more than one mechanism but have been categorised under only one, with primacy given in the following order: keyword search on DSC's databases and analysis of published information, direct communication with potential funders, interviews with funders and stakeholders, and information in accounts and annual reports of specialist organisations. Micro charities have annual incomes of under £10,000, small charities have annual incomes of between £10,000 and £100,000, lower-medium charities have annual incomes of between £100,000 and £500,000, upper-medium charities have annual incomes of between £500,000 and £5 million, large charities have annual incomes of between £5 million and £100 million and super major charities have annual incomes of over £100 million (income relates to charities' most recent financial year at the time of data collection, 12.9% of which ended in 2022, 83.9% of which ended in 2021, and 3.2% of which ended in 2020). Designation of recent and previous example grants is based on the specialist organisations' most recent financial year and immediately preceding financial year, respectively. Grants to individuals, organisations or both refers specifically to where these are intended to support Armed Forces children and young people, not funders' grant-making activities as a whole.

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Funding for Armed Forces Children and Young People

An overview and analysis

This report provides the first systematic and rigorous account of the landscape of funding that supports Armed Forces children and young people. This includes funding from charities, other voluntary sector organisations, government bodies, businesses and social enterprises.

The analysis in this report fills in a gap in research that identifies the organisations which provide funding for Armed Forces children and young people. It increases the previously limited funders' knowledge of others operating in the sector, helps understand how funding is used and highlights opportunities for improving collaboration and evaluation.

The subject area is thoroughly explored to provide a body of evidence and insightful analysis which informs policy, practice and research. The report aims to answer the following questions:

- How many funders support Armed Forces children and young people?
- How much funding is provided?
- Who can be funded?
- What can be funded?
- What is the role of monitoring and evaluation?
- What are the opportunities for collaboration?

This report will be useful to funders and other organisations or professionals that work with Armed Forces children and young people to increase their knowledge around funding for this specific cohort. In addition, the authors hope that the conclusions and recommendations of this research will help inform policies and strategies, and extend opportunities for conversation and collaboration in directing funding to Armed Forces children and young people.

'This report by the Directory of Social Change (DSC) fills the gap in research, providing for the first time a systematic picture of the funding landscape of support and invaluable insights into the challenges and opportunities for funders to enhance the impact of their investments in Armed Forces children and young people's futures.'

Clare Scherer, Chief Executive, Naval Children's Charity and Chair, Service Children's Progression Alliance Funders' Forum [from the foreword]