



## Balksbury Federation

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**We commit to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant**

**and**

**support the Armed Forces Community.**

**We recognise the contribution that Service personnel,**

**both regular and reservist, veterans and military**

**families make to our organisation, our community and to the country.**

Signed on behalf of:

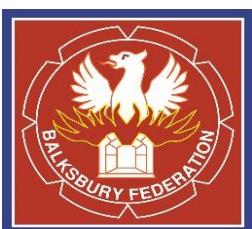
**Balksbury Federation**

Signed: *F. Farrell*

Name: Fran Farrell

Position: Federated Deputy Headteacher

Date: 22.09.23



# The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom  
His Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

## Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We, **Balksbury Federation**, will endeavour to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant:

- *Members of the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantages arising from their service in the provision of public and commercial services.*
- *In some circumstances special provision may be justified, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured or bereaved.*

## Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, reservists, veterans, the cadet movement and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant by:

- **Promoting the Armed Forces:** through our Forces Families information leaflet and the 'Service Families' page on the federation website, we promote the support we are able to offer to our service families and support our Balksbury community as a whole to understand the challenges faced by our service families. Staff and service children wear our Balksbury Forces badge with pride. Service children attend a weekly 'Forces Club' run by our Community Support Leads (CSLs). This is an important opportunity for the children to spend time together and support each other as well as receive support and guidance from our CSLs. The children value this opportunity to spend time together and enjoy enrichment activities including cooking and crafts.
- **Communications, engagement and outreach:** the federation website page 'Service Families' makes clear the support available to our service children. If a parent is deployed to a different time zone, where possible the federation will arrange Google Meets within the school day so that our service children can see their parent. Each year Remembrance Week in the federation is facilitated through assemblies and reflection time. The federation signposts families to support for example, 'Forces Family Day' at the University of Winchester provided as part of their Widening Participation strategy. The federation runs 'Coffee, Cake and Chat' mornings for all parents. This is a valuable tool for welcoming new parents into our Balksbury community and helping them to form a support network.
- **Commercial:** Balksbury Federation is signed up to Childcare Vouchers so that our service families are able to claim funding for wraparound care provided by the federation.
- **Community:** we support our staff who are partners of members of the armed forces. Emotional support is always available through our CSLs. The Leadership Team is always willing to listen and problem solve when a coparent is deployed and, wherever possible, will support flexible working if it is needed. We recognise that our service family staff may need to move away and, when this happens, we keep them updated of roles within the federation as they arise so that they can apply should they be moving back into the area.
- **Health:** the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our service children and parents is supported by the federation Community Support Leads (CSLs) and all members of the federated team. The CSLs are trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistants and have a wealth of knowledge and expertise. They help children with a huge range of issues including anxiety, relationships and

bereavement. They are also there for our service parents to offer support and advice or signpost them to support available outside of the federation.

- **Education:** Bawksbury Federation has a clear strategy for the effective use of the Service Pupil Premium. Service children are tracked throughout their time at the federation by the Pupil Premium Lead who meets with class teachers to discuss each child's development. Bawksbury Federation works as a team to ensure that the right support is in place at the right time. The federation uses the Service Children Progression Alliance's Thriving Lives Toolkit to reflect on practice and identify next steps for provision for our service families. When a new service child moves into the federation, we request that their previous school completes our Forces Passport. This supports us in ensuring a smooth transition by providing key information about each child's development, talents, interests, prior learning, worries or concerns and education history. It also supports us in identifying a suitable 'buddy' for each child to support social development.
- **Ensuring service children have a voice:** Bawksbury Federation is committed to ensuring all of our children have a voice. Through our Forces Club, children are given a forum for sharing ideas and discussing issues. The Forces Club have led assemblies to explain to other children in the federation what life is like for service children. Every member of the federated community is in the SMART School Council and is able to submit an agenda item to discuss at federation SMART School Council meetings.

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Armed Forces Community and our federation community on how we are doing.