

# Monthly SCC Newsletter

## May 2024



Read on to find out about our wonderful award winners!



## Service Children's Network

Our termly meetings are open to both Headteachers and any other member of staff who act as 'Service Children Advocates' at your school or organisation. Please continue reading to find out what is in store for our Summer Term meeting!

## Social Media



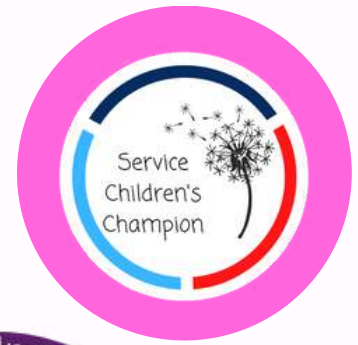
Please follow, like and share our new social media accounts.



servicechildrenschampion@northyorks.gov.uk



Contact us at our shared email address



# Events



## Service Children Awards

The inaugural Service Children Awards took place on Thursday 25th April at The Garden Rooms in Leyburn.

Guests were entertained superbly by British Army Band Catterick. Grahame Shepherd MBE was responsible for hosting the awards ceremony and made all of our guests feel welcome and at ease.

Major Finlay Anderson, champion of BBC's 'Gladiators' 2024 started off the proceedings via a video he recorded for us whilst on deployment overseas. Awards were presented by members of this year's judging panel and winners received star-shaped trophies. There were so many memorable moments such as Benedict Simpson-Alexander, our Sporting Champion, making a speech and thanking his parents and young Billy whose Dad has recently been deployed overseas having 'Happy Birthday' sung to him to make him feel special.

We also were entertained by students from Bedale High School who showed us all the power of teamwork and how to rock!!



Award Winners 2024



# Musical Champion



A Service child who has excelled in Music whilst based in North Yorkshire



## Hazel

"Hazel is a very talented musician. She actively supports the Service Children's Community Choir where she sings, plays her flute and conducts. Hazel has a very positive attitude, always smiles and is a great role model.

She is always keen to help the younger children with all aspects of the choir. She can plait hair, tie shoe laces and give lovely cuddles.

She is also always enthusiastic about helping the adults using her musical knowledge, enthusiasm and confidence

Hazel represented Service Children when she sang on Britain's Got Talent, singing 2 songs written by Service Children."

## Hazel

"Hazel has become a brilliant musician following in her dad's military music footsteps. Since moving to North Yorkshire she has performed at Ripon Cathedral as both an ensemble and solo artist. Proudly sung on Britain's got talent in the service children's choir and supported her community musically at church and working with younger musicians.

Hazel does all this whilst her dad is posted to the south east and whilst I work full time as a teacher."

# Sporting Champion



A Service child who has excelled in sport whilst based in North Yorkshire

## Benedict

"Benedict demonstrates total dedication to his sport, running. He adheres to his training program rigorously, ensuring that every session is completed with determination. Despite his demanding athletic schedule, he also manages to maintain the highest academic standards possible. With unwavering commitment to both his athletic pursuits and academic responsibilities, he truly stands out as an exceptional student"



## Benedict

"An exceptional runner who has competed at a national level. He continues to balance his academic work with his frequent competing and the required training. And a nicer, more positive, and grounded young person you would struggle to find. It's this all round combination that stands out to me as being truly exceptional."



# Community Champion

A Service child who has gone above and beyond to support their local community



## Riley

“Riley has been a service child all his life and sadly lost his mother in 2020. He was living with grandparents in Manchester but was then thrown into military life when he moved to the garrison with his Dad in spring 2023.

Since arriving and awaiting a school placement, he has volunteered his time helping local councillors, litter picking around the garrison and building planters for a Community allotment. He helps catterick garrison football club by refereeing younger children's matches at weekends. He is always on the lookout to see where he can commit his free time to helping others locally. He is an inspirational young person with a big heart and deserves recognition for his efforts.”

“Riley has recently moved to Catterick to live with his Father and his family after sadly losing his Mother when he was 11. His Grandparents were no longer able to care for him so he left his home town and school to start a new life with his Military Dad, his Step Mum and 2 young siblings. One of whom has Autism and is non-verbal.

Whilst awaiting a school place Riley has thrown himself into helping others by litter picking, building veg planters and helping to transform Bramble Woods into an amazing community space. He is also a great support at home helping out with his siblings.

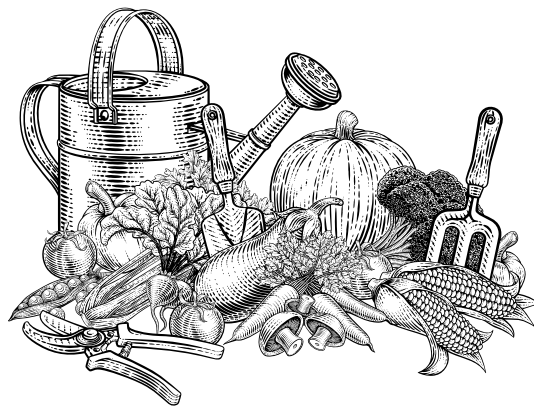
He has also passed his referee course and now referees younger children's matches at weekends. He has joined the local rugby club to make friends and plays regularly.

Riley deserves this award as although he has encountered tragic and life changing experiences at such a young age he has made positive and rewarding choices that have helped others in the community. He is a remarkable and resilient young man who's caring and positive approach puts others before himself and he should be so proud.”

# Service Children Friendly Club/Group



An award for a club or group that goes above and beyond in welcoming and supporting military families



## e50K Catterick

"I would love see recognition for this group as their are more volunteers than staff, and all volunteers are military families including children who volunteer on site. We have had a three year old litter picking before, very sweet.

Bramble Woods is a 3.5 acre woodland and allotment site, which wouldn't be as fantastic as it is without volunteers from the local community. We are in the heart of Catterick Garrison and free to access 24/7.

The volunteers donate their time to the site, whether this be gardening or woodwork, or a seasonal event. We have created some great impacts in 2023, from children's mental health to teaching life cycles of living creatures, we are all inclusive.

What I really enjoy about our events is seeing grandparents spending precious time with their service grandchildren in tje fresh air and learning together. E50K facilitate, but it is a site and a company run by the community-for the community."

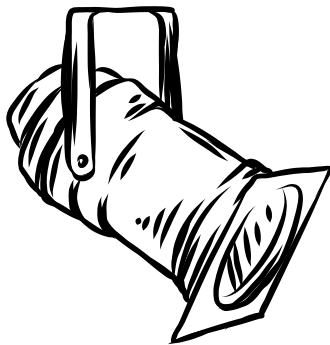




# Creative Champion



A Service child who has excelled in the Arts whilst based in North Yorkshire



## Luke

"Luke has been a leading member of our school stage crew for the last four years. Luke began working with the stage crew and was particularly interested in stage lighting and sound. He has been involved in every single production and performance event for the last four years at Bedale High School demonstrating complete commitment, professionalism and a real sense of resilience.

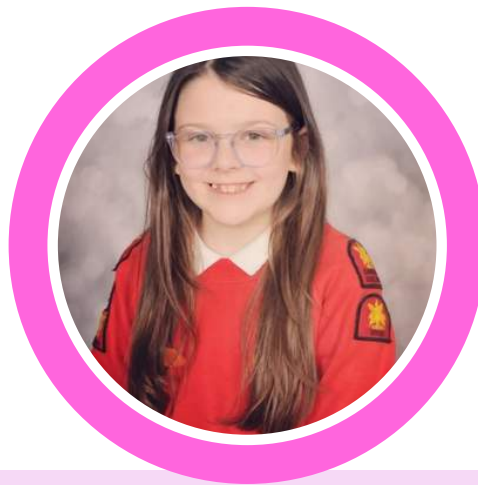
Last year we had a completely new sound and lighting system installed in our main hall. Luke was fully invested in learning how to operate this new system and attended a number of externally training events as well as independently giving up his own time to master the system. After he had worked hard to understand the system, he then gave up willingly yet more of his time to teach some of our younger students how to operate the new lighting desk and set up the stage lights.

Luke is a mature and polite young man. His steady, and consistent approach to his stage crew duties has made him a valuable member of our team. The younger students look up to him and have a huge amount of respect for his knowledge and his kind and compassionate approach to his stage crew technical duties."



# Caring Champion

A young carer who supports their parent or siblings when a Serving parent is away from home



## Kacey

"Kacey's dad lives down in sandhurst (we are married unaccompanied) as a family we didn't move down as her brother TJ has complex needs and health needs TJ is 10, non verbal, has autism, is tube fed, still in nappies ect, he's settled at his school ect so we decided that instead of unsettling everything this would be best for our family. Kacey helps me so much with TJ, she always puts herself second, she will check her brother is OK, she will get me things that I need, she will contstaly ask if I'm OK and do I need a cup of tea. Shes so understating and so helpful when I need her. TJ loves his big sister so much. It can be very hard for kacey as TJ needs alot of my attention but kacey doesn't get upset or anything, she just smiles and gets on. TJ doesnt sleep well and this can affect everyone in the house, but kacey still goes to school and tries 100% every day. Kacey is learning makaton at home so she can sign with her brother, she is always telling people about him and his autsim, shes so caring to people who have disabilities because they are like her borthor. I would love for her to get this special award so she knows how incredibly proud I always am of her and how caring she is, it matters she matters."

# Service Children Friendly School of The Year



An award for a school that goes above and beyond in welcoming and supporting military families

## Beckwithshaw

"I am a parent of 3 children who attend Beckwithshaw Primary School. I am a serving soldier and this is my 3rd move whilst in the Armed forces over 21 years. In October 23 my family and myself moved to Harrogate and we received a warm welcome from this school and they went above and beyond to make us feel comfortable knowing we would be leaving our children in their care.

Moving schools was very stressful for my children with my son age 5 and daughter aged 8, Beckwithshaw was fully capable of making them feel at ease very quickly and ensuring all their needs were met and fully understood the change they have just went through.

I was invited into the school to talk to the children about Remembrance Day, once again was made to feel very welcome.

Their continued support for my children when I'm away is the best I have ever seen.

These schools are highly recommended for recognition for Service children's friendly school of the year."



# Service Children Advocate of The Year

An award to recognise the outstanding support provided by an adult based in one of North Yorkshire's schools whose work directly impacts Service children



**Richmond School  
& Sixth Form College**

Being the best we can be



## Stephen Birdsall



“Since his appointment as our Services Children advocate Stephen has had a huge impact in raising the profile of our services children. With regular meetings with the cohort Stephen has created a support system where students can connect with other students who understand the unique circumstances of being a services child. He has also offered a range of opportunities for our students to be represented across the school, community and county. For example, our services representatives had the opportunity to present the remembrance wreath at Ripen Cathedral, and having our services students and cadets attend school in their services uniforms on remembrance day was a really special moment and sparked many conversations with staff and students who were not aware before. Stephen is and continues to be a real champion of this unique and special group of students.”

## Stephen Birdsall

“I have known Stephen for a long time and his consistent resilience, positivity, drive and determination never fails to impress me. He always goes the extra mile for service children (and everyone, actually) and not just within his work hours but outside of work too. His personality and can do attitude are so infectious too. TEAM STE!”

# Inspirational Service Child of the Year



An award to recognise the outstanding bravery of a Service child



## Lyla

"Lyla has gone through so much with her health from such a young age and still continues to fight and get up everyday. Attending school. She is a true inspiration and truly deserves it."

## Lyla



"I would like to nominate Lyla for this award as she is the true definition of brave. She has battled with a brain tumor from a young age (3 years old) and had around 17 operations on her brain to date with another one due over Christmas.

I have worked closely with Lyla since she started Le-Cateau school, I have seen first hand how her illness affects her and how much pain this causes her.

She has always shown great bravery and resilience. Even at her worst times when she was extremely poorly in school, she would refuse to be sent home to rest and ask to continue with her school work. She always put others before herself and I have never heard her complain.

Her illness has not stopped her achieving anything she puts her mind too, she even fundraises for a charity she set up, which pays for a caravan that allows sick service children and their families have rest bite and make memories.

I have never met anyone quite like Lyla, she is not only brave and resilient, but also has qualities that we should all aspire too."





<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/booking/t-rpdjlej>

Book your tickets today!

# Events



## Armed Forces Day for Children Wednesday 19th June

We currently have 500 children and young people booked in to attend Armed Forces Day for Children this year! There are still plenty of places available. This is a free event and is organised by Catterick Garrison HQ. It will take a similar form to last year with a wide range of military units taking part and providing activities. There will once again be food provided by the Army and free icecreams from the BFBS icecream van! This event is suitable for all age ranges. If you would like to book more than 32 places please contact me and I can help you to do this.

If you need to make arrangements for parking please let me know so that I can notify the organisers.

This event is only open to schools and it is not for individual families to attend, There will be more information shared with you in the June newsletter but don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.



Save the Date



Wednesday 19th June



# Events



## Month of the Military Child - The Big Virtual Assembly

**I have loved seeing so many of you celebrating the Month of the Military Child at your schools this year. This year I offered you all the opportunity to access a free assembly presentation and many of you then shared that with your school communities. I have received some really lovely feedback that I wanted to share with you...**

I just wanted to say thank you for the assembly that you shared. My Year 5/6 class watched it on Friday and were totally focused the whole time it was playing. They were excited to recognise you from when you came into our class in the Autumn term and especially loved the rap ... and the fact that two of them were seen in one of the pictures from Ripon Cathedral! It prompted a lot of discussion: particularly as the dad of one of my pupils is currently away. She clearly felt that her contribution was being recognised and enjoyed telling us more about her experiences and feelings. The rest of the class also felt that you were speaking to them - I think the contribution to the welfare of service children by those pupils who are their friends and classmates, and the difficulties of watching friends move on is sometimes overlooked, so it was lovely to hear their support being acknowledged.

Thank you for all your hard work in recognising, valuing and celebrating these children.

**I hope that lots of you have found this a useful resource and I will continue to find as many ways as I can to engage with schools moving forward.**



Coming soon...



Festival of Remembrance  
Wednesday 6th November

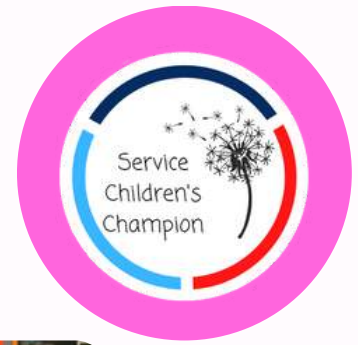




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Contact us at  
our shared  
email address



# Events



## All Together Now - Art workshops

During April I visited 10 schools to deliver Art workshops. Lucy Pittaway, a successful commercial artist based here in North Yorkshire kindly supported the project by providing a print to inspire the children which was called 'Starting Again'. Lucy added some dandelions, the symbol of the military child and helped us to divide the picture into 100 squares.

Over the two weeks children and young people recreated a section of the bigger picture on mini canvases using acrylic paints. They did not see the final picture at all so had no idea of what the final result would look like. I think you can agree that it is absolutely stunning. Lucy saw the final piece for the first time at the awards ceremony and also presented an award to our Creative Champion Luke.

We are hopeful that the painting will be on display over the coming months in various locations so that children and families can go and visit it, watch this space for further updates.

A huge thank you to everyone involved in this project!



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Contact us at  
our new  
email address



# News



## Summer SCN Meeting

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 23rd May at 10am on TEAMS**, the second part of the meeting will be an opportunity to reflect on the work of the Service Children's Champion in the last few years and an opportunity to share ideas and thoughts on future events. I would like to hear what you think has worked well and what you would like to see more of in the future.

Before the meeting it would be worthwhile reading the recently published 'Voice of Schools SEND project' which you can find at [sciss.org.uk](http://sciss.org.uk)

Also if you have any other business that you would like to be included in the agenda please contact me directly by 10th May.

SCISS  
Voice of Schools SEND  
Report



Summer Term SCN Meeting  
Thursday 23rd May  
10:00am on TEAMS  
CPD - SEND







Our supporters



# Thank You!



## What a month!

I absolutely love my job as I get to collaborate and work with so many fantastic schools and educators. Meeting so many Service children and young people reminds me how their experiences are unique, they are not a homogenous group. Investing time in them and celebrating their identity does matter. The Service Children Awards was an incredibly special day and we hope to repeat it next year with the hope that even more children, young people and organisations can be recognised and celebrated. Please don't forget to book in for Armed Forces Day for Children as you are in for a very exciting day! I will hopefully see some of you there!

Angela

