

Thriving Lives for  
Service Children

Service Children's Progression



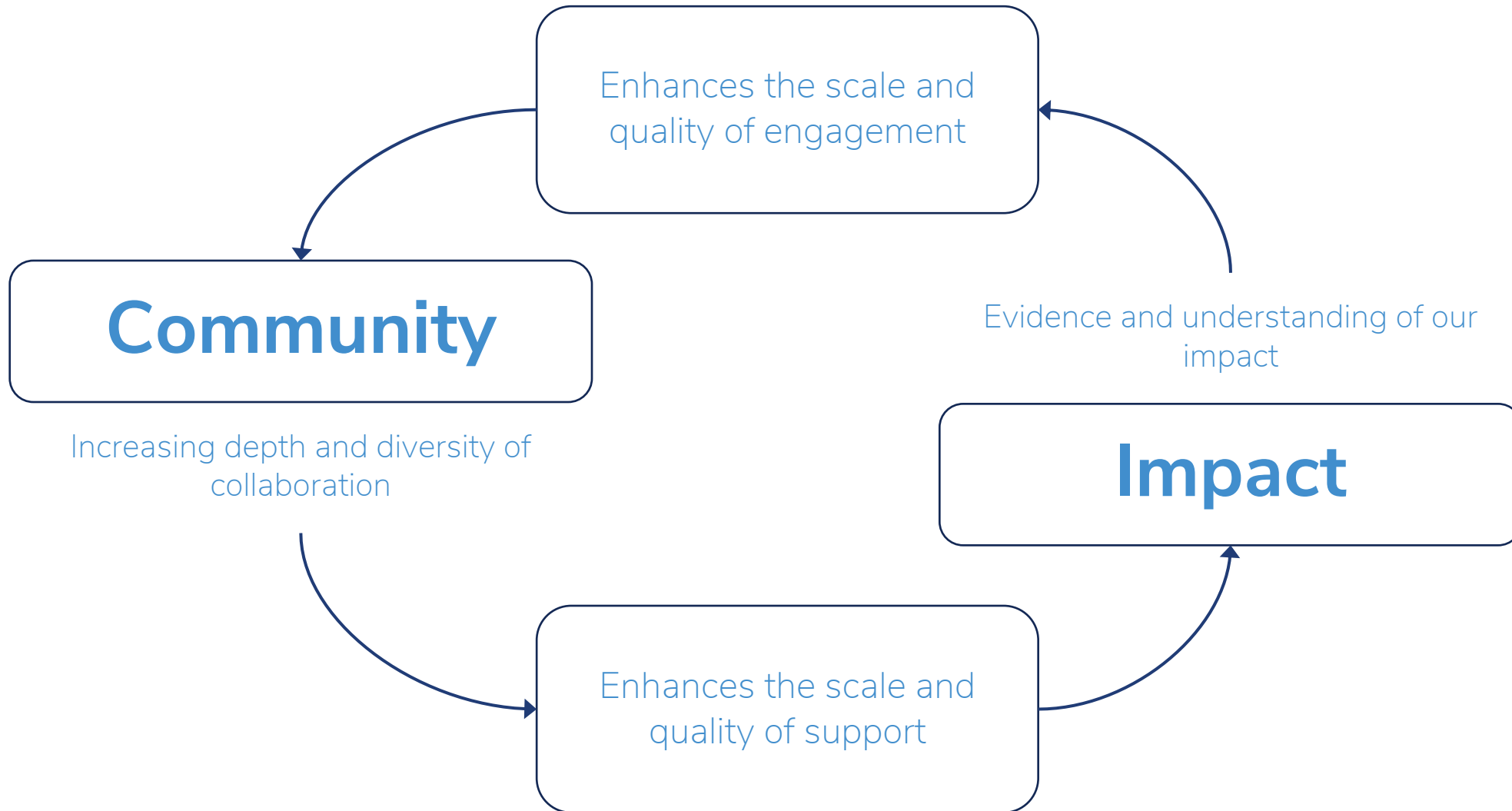
# Community Impact

SCiP Alliance Strategy  
2022-26

November 2022

# Community Impact means...

- Impact **ON** community
  - The sense and values of community are enhanced by the Alliance's ways of working and greater impact is possible because we collaborate as part of a shared Alliance Community
- Impact **OF** community
  - Armed Forces children and young people's lives are enhanced through action taken as part of the Alliance Community because our collective strengths enable more and better support



## THE NEED WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

The children of armed forces personnel have huge potential, but are at risk of underachieving and too few practitioners are equipped and confident to support them.



For example, Service children

- Are less likely to access higher education
- May attain less well, if they move school a lot
- Can experience considerable social and emotional disruption impacting their mental health and wellbeing

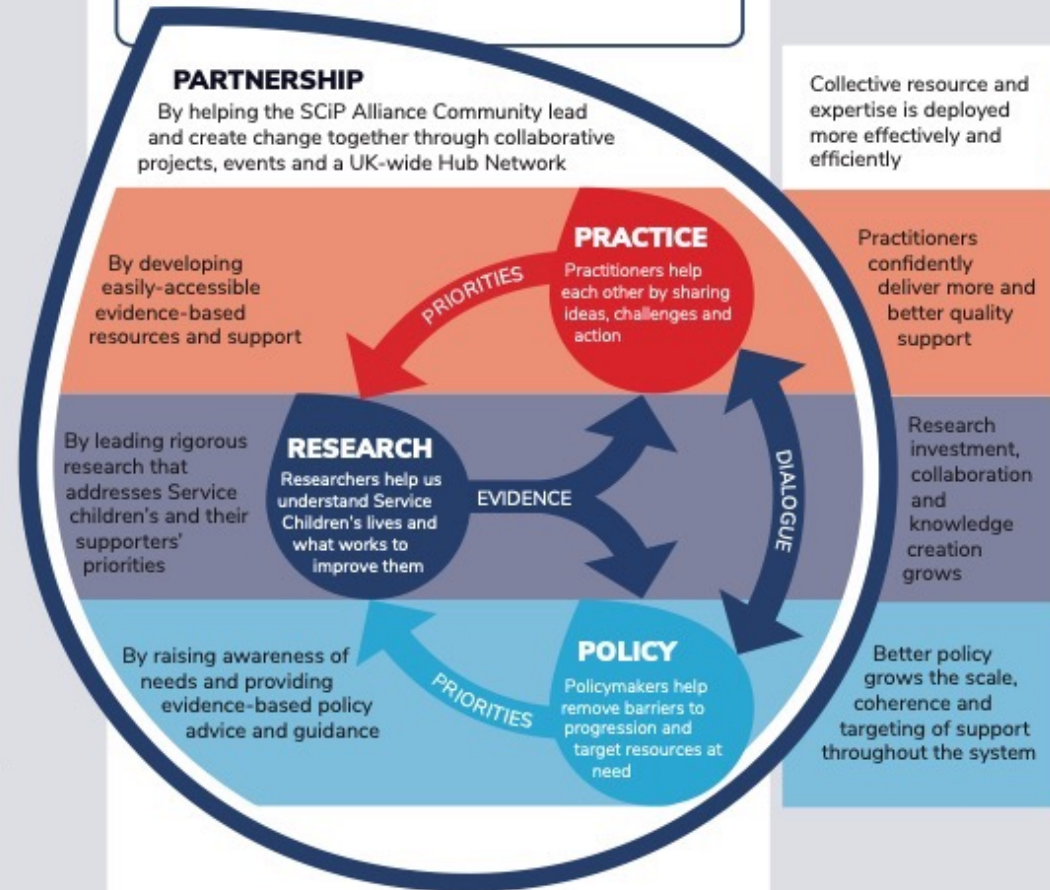
And most professionals in schools, colleges, universities and other organisations:

- Have low awareness of Service children and their lives
- Do not access evidence-based resources and support
- Do not feel confident about providing the right support

## OUR MISSION

HOW WE MAKE CHANGE

We bring together practitioners, researchers, policymakers and funders to build a stronger evidence-base, better policy, and enhanced support for Service children's education and progression, placing their voices at the heart of all we do.



## THE IMPACT THE CHANGE THAT RESULTS

The scale and quality of support for Service children grows and they have the ambition, skills, and opportunities to make the most of their unique talents and experiences.

Collective resource and expertise is deployed more effectively and efficiently

Practitioners confidently deliver more and better quality support

Research investment, collaboration and knowledge creation grows

Better policy grows the scale, coherence and targeting of support throughout the system



## OUR VISION

**Thriving lives for  
Service children**

Grow the SCiP Alliance...

# COMMUNITY

We want the full diversity of stakeholders supporting Service children to be deeply and sustainably engaged in collaborative action on our shared mission and vision.

**Embed** meaningful engagement with armed forces children and young people throughout the Alliance  
**Enhance** our leading role as a trusted advocate for the sector, through the cycles of listening to and action for our Community  
**Expand** the reach and diversity of the SCiP Alliance Community and Hub Network throughout the UK and overseas, and with armed forces partners  
**Establish** an online SCiP Alliance Community platform, with support for community-led and themed collaboration

Grow the Community's

# IMPACT

We want evidence-based practice and policy to set the standard at every phase of Service children's lives and to be the vanguard of rigorous research underpinning it.

**Embed** the Thriving Lives Toolkit suite as the quality standard for evidence-based practice in schools  
**Enhance** the suite of support for evidence-based practice  
**Expand** the Thriving Lives Toolkit throughout the learner life-course from early years to higher education and early careers  
**Establish** a research network, strategy and the foundations for a research centre to drive sustained and systematic improvement in our understanding of Service children's lives and what works to improve them.

## ENABLERS

**Embed** asset-based approaches, collaboration, and shared leadership as core features of work throughout the Alliance  
**Enhance** our financial security through sustainable, resilient, long-term funding growth  
**Expand** the capacity of the SCiP Alliance team to support our ambitions for community engagement and leadership, policy influencing, research and impact evaluation  
**Establish** Establish an impact evaluation framework and work to ensure the Community's impact is widely recognised and understood

# COMMUNITY

We want the full diversity of stakeholders supporting Service children to be deeply and sustainably engaged in collaborative action on our shared mission and vision.

## Community 1 **Embed meaningful engagement with armed forces children and young people throughout the Alliance**

We place the voices of Armed Forces children and young people at the heart of all we do.

We do this because we believe the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is right that children and young people should be involved in work affecting their lives. We do this because our work supporting Service children will be more effective when we listen genuinely and act accordingly. We do this because it can be transformative for the children and young people themselves, enhancing skills, opportunities and agency.

For our listening to make a difference, we must be deliberate, be open, be child-centred and be willing to change (Hall, 2021). We will work to embed these principles and grow engagement with Service children throughout the Alliance that is meaningful, ethical and impactful.



# COMMUNITY

We want the full diversity of stakeholders supporting Service children to be deeply and sustainably engaged in collaborative action on our shared mission and vision.

Community 2 **Enhance our leading role as a trusted advocate for the sector, through the cycles of listening to and action for our Community**

Key strengths of Alliance are its diversity and collaborative action.

The SCiP Alliance Management Group works through the two complementary cycles of listening and action, so that the rich diversity of experiences and expertise in the Community is represented and understood, and that the action we take together in response reflects a more systematic account of the sector and a shared set of priorities for improving the lives of Armed Forces children and young people. This listening to and action for the Community is central to the group's – the Alliance's – mission.

We want the good work done establishing this approach to be enhanced by piloting a complete cycle of listening and action, by learning together what works and why, and by demonstrating how rigorous consultation and planning can realise meaningful change for the community and the Service children they support.

Grow the SCiP Alliance...

# COMMUNITY

We want the full diversity of stakeholders supporting Service children to be deeply and sustainably engaged in collaborative action on our shared mission and vision.

**Community 3 Expand the reach and diversity of the SCiP Alliance Community and Hub Network throughout the UK and overseas, and with armed forces partners**

The SCiP Alliance Community and Hub Network are a driving force for change in the sector.

In only a few years, the innovation, commitment and practical action of hundreds of allies – supported by pioneering Hub leaders – have created a thriving community of practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and supporters. The Hub Network helps allies do together what they cannot do alone. And each Hub is a connection point between local action addressing local needs and national action on the biggest priorities. We have seen huge growth, especially with practitioners in education, but we want to bring more allies into active engagement with the Community.

We will work to better understand the geography, sectors, and roles of stakeholders connecting effectively through the Hub Network and we will develop plans to grow the scale, diversity and depth of engagement throughout the SCiP Alliance Community.



Grow the SCiP Alliance...

# COMMUNITY

We want the full diversity of stakeholders supporting Service children to be deeply and sustainably engaged in collaborative action on our shared mission and vision.

## Community 4 **Establish an online SCiP Alliance Community platform, with support for community-led and themed collaboration**

Genuine, active and impactful partnership is at the core of our mission.

The growth of the Hub Network, the creation of community-led, themed activity like the SCiP Alliance Funders' Forum, and the evidence of our Community Consultation demonstrate both the power of partnership and the desire among partners to do more – to achieve more for Service children, together. One impact of the global pandemic is an accelerated drive to more flexible, engaging, effective online collaboration.

We will work with the Community to develop and continually enhance an online collaboration space that supports allies to develop communities of practice around themes of shared interest and priority. And we will work with our Community to explore what makes community work online, and the values that will help it thrive.

# IMPACT

We want evidence-based practice and policy to set the standard at every phase of Service children's lives and to be the vanguard of rigorous research underpinning it.

## Impact 1 **Embed the Thriving Lives Toolkit suite as the quality standard for evidence-based practice in schools**

The Thriving Lives Toolkit is central to our ambitions for evidence-based practice in schools.

Independent research identified the Thriving Lives Toolkit as a "step-change development". Robust research identifying seven principles of effective support and thorough testing in diverse settings have created a practical continuous improvement tool, highly valued by school leaders and teachers, as well as partners in local authorities, trusts, and support agencies. The potential for the Thriving Lives Toolkit, with the supporting suite of training, case studies and other resources, is huge. And so are our ambitions for the impact it can have on the scale and quality of support for Armed Forces children and young people.

We will work to turn early success into sustained impact, so that the Toolkit becomes the widely recognised and highly valued, go-to suite of support for schools in all settings. And we will explore ways of turning the Toolkit into a trusted sign of quality allowing schools to demonstrate their commitment.

# IMPACT

We want evidence-based practice and policy to set the standard at every phase of Service children's lives and to be the vanguard of rigorous research underpinning it.

## Impact 2 **Enhance the suite of support for evidence-based practice**

Easily-accessible, evidence-based resources and support are a foundation stone of the Alliance.

Our first ever community consultation told us that people wanted to be better connected to each other, to evidence and to support. The provision of resources, training and events built on robust evidence that help organisations achieve impact for Armed Forces children and young people in ways that fit their context has been a key part of that. Subsequent research has shown that we have already had a significant impact on practitioners' access to resources and their confidence providing support. It is a great foundation to build on.

We will review the current suite of support, including resources, training and events, refresh our understanding of practitioners' needs, and refine our offering to better target support at those needs. And we will work with our Community to enhance the awareness, use and impact of our support.

# IMPACT

We want evidence-based practice and policy to set the standard at every phase of Service children's lives and to be the vanguard of rigorous research underpinning it.

## Impact 3 **Expand the Thriving Lives Toolkit throughout the learner life-course from early years to higher education and early careers**

The Thriving Lives Toolkit has “significant potential for transformative impact”.

The high value placed on the Thriving Lives Toolkit by schools and their supporters is testimony to its power to help diverse settings take coherent approaches to both common and unique challenges. Independent research highlights the significant potential for the Toolkit to benefit Armed Forces children and young people throughout their education journeys. Evidence is helping us understand Service children's needs from early years to higher education, and we need to respond accordingly to be true to our vision of thriving lives for Service children.

We will work with partners – in research, policy, practice and funding – throughout the sector to extend the power of the Toolkit into every phase of the education life-course and to support successful transitions into thriving adulthoods.

# IMPACT

We want evidence-based practice and policy to set the standard at every phase of Service children's lives and to be the vanguard of rigorous research underpinning it.

Impact 4 **Establish a research network, strategy and the foundations for a research centre to drive sustained and systematic improvement in our understanding of Service children's lives and what works to improve them**

Robust research lays the foundation for impact and the evidence of its realisation.

Since the Alliance's inception, rigorous research has provided evidence for steering our course, insight into the complex lives of the Armed Forces children and young people we support, and understanding of what is working (or not) and why. The Alliance is a research-to-practice community, and research has demonstrated repeatedly how much stakeholders from all parts of the sector value that. We have seen growth in the scale of research investment, in our shared knowledge of Service children's lives and in research collaboration.

We will create more structured mechanisms to bring more researchers from more diverse disciplines together to improve coherence and collaboration. And we will work with key stakeholders to put in place a research strategy and the foundation stones of a dedicated research centre.

# ENABLERS

## Enabler 1 **Embed asset-based approaches, collaboration, and shared leadership as core features of work throughout the Alliance**

How we work is as important to us as what we do, or what we achieve.

The Alliance is a long-standing advocate of approaches that celebrate the strengths and diversity of Armed Forces children and young people, and we have applied that same commitment to all our work. With a similar commitment to genuine partnership in both the leadership of our mission and the action to realise it, the Alliance has flourished. Evidence demonstrates the high value placed on the Alliance's role "bringing people within the sector together, developing a shared sense of purpose and creating fertile conditions for action" at both local and national levels.

We will work with the community to refine our understanding of the key character-traits of the Alliance, to formalise their expression and support their development.

# ENABLERS

## Enabler 2 **Enhance our financial security through sustainable, resilient, long-term funding growth**

An ambitious, long-term vision needs a sustained and stable funding model.

The Alliance has achieved a huge amount for those supporting Armed Forces children and young people by bringing a robust evidence-base, strong collaboration and systematic approaches to funders keen to see investments bring meaningful change. Research demonstrates the scale of the need is beyond our current resource – and the community wants the Alliance to do more.

We will work to bring more funders into the Community and help allies work with them to address evidenced priorities. And we will enhance the stability of the Alliance's funding model, so that steady income growth over the long-term supports the scale of our ambitions for the Community and for the Service children we serve.



# ENABLERS

## Enabler 3 **Expand the capacity of the SCiP Alliance team to support our ambitions for community engagement and leadership, policy influencing, research and impact evaluation**

The SCiP Alliance central team is the hidden engine of the Community's impact.

The SCiP Alliance's small staff team invest its very limited time with an acute clarity of purpose. So, a few people provide highly focused support and see considerable value added through the large network they enable. And our Community Consultation highlights the desire among allies for the team to do much more: in expanding the community, in influencing policy, in growing research and in demonstrating impact.

We will work to at least double the capacity of the team to deliver our strategic objectives. And we will work with the Community to develop strategies for engagement, policy-influencing and research and refine our understanding of the support that makes the greatest difference.

# ENABLERS

## Enabler 4 **Establish an impact evaluation framework and work to ensure the Community's impact is widely recognised and understood**

Impact is why the Community exists, and the Community makes that impact possible.

Independent research demonstrates “the SCiP Alliance has had a positive impact both on individual practice and on the community of professionals” – as well as “on the lives of children and young people from Armed Forces families”. We need to enhance our understanding of that impact and how it is achieved, through the framework of our theory of change.

We will develop and implement an impact evaluation framework to capture and better understand the impact of the SCiP Alliance through the framework of our theory of change. And we will develop rigorous and compelling communications of that impact to the Community and the sector.