

# FESTIVAL OF FRIENDS



On June 6, 2024, 27 schools gathered to celebrate the Lincolnshire Festival of Friends at Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln, showcasing both completed and ongoing projects aimed at enhancing the lives of Service Pupils. With over 35 schools involved throughout the year-long project, the event has had a significant impact on Service Pupils across Lincolnshire.

The project, supported by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and funded by LiNCHigher and the Armed Forces Education Trust (AFET), provided schools with access to specialised training through the Service Children's Progression Alliance (SCiP) Thriving Lives Toolkit. This training, delivered by independent education consultant Matt Blyton, allowed schools to identify and implement projects tailored to better support Service Pupils.

The event not only celebrated the achievements of the participating schools but also provided a platform for sharing best practices and fostering a sense of community among educators and students. Schools displayed a wide range of initiatives, from mentoring programs and tailored curriculum adjustments to extracurricular activities designed to build resilience and community among Service Pupils.



## IMPACTFUL PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

One notable project was a peer-mentoring program that paired KS3 Service Pupils with primary aged pupils, fostering a support network and promoting leadership skills. Another school developed a welcome pack for new students joining part way through the year, including a welcome from the headteacher, school map and their buddy for the year.

Extracurricular initiatives included clubs and activities focused on building resilience and emotional wellbeing, such as arts and sports programs that encourage teamwork and personal expression. These programs have helped Service Pupils navigate the unique challenges they face, such as frequent relocations and family separations.



# FESTIVAL OF FRIENDS

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND FUTURE PLANS

The Lincolnshire Festival of Friends also highlighted the importance of community engagement in supporting Service Pupils. Schools collaborated with local military bases, veteran organisations, and community groups to create a more inclusive environment for Service Pupils and their families. This collaborative approach has strengthened the relationship between schools and the wider community, ensuring ongoing support and resources for Service Pupils.

Looking ahead, the success of this project has laid the groundwork for future initiatives. Plans are underway to expand the reach of the Thriving Lives Toolkit and to develop additional resources that address the evolving needs of Service Pupils. Schools are committed to building on the momentum generated by this year's festival, continuing to innovate and adapt their support strategies to ensure that every Service Pupil thrives academically, socially, and emotionally.

## CONCLUSION

The Lincolnshire Festival of Friends has been a milestone event, showcasing the collective efforts of schools to enhance the educational experience of Service Pupils. Through targeted projects, specialized training, and community collaboration, the initiative has not only improved the lives of Service Pupils but also enriched the educational landscape of Lincolnshire as a whole. As the festival continues to grow, it promises to inspire further innovation and commitment to supporting Service Pupils for years to come.

