

 THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST



Ministry
of Defence

Armed Forces Families Fund

Early Years Programme

FAQs



2024/25

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Early Years Fund Programme 2024/25
FAQs**

Does my project need to achieve all three outcomes?

No. Your project only needs to address one of the outcomes. You can, however, address more than one outcome within your project if that is appropriate to the challenges that you are seeking to address.

Who will benefit under this programme?

Your project must clearly benefit currently serving Armed Forces families, this includes pupils whose parents are on full commitment as part of the full-time Reserve Service, with a child under 5 years not yet in school.

How can I apply to this programme?

There are two ways in which you can apply for a grant under this programme.

Single Applications: For settings with 50% or more Service children on roll for the duration of the project, you can apply as a single application.

Groups or Clusters: If you have less than 50% Service children on roll, you may still apply as part of a 'cluster'. This would include working with at least one more eligible setting in your area, which also has small numbers of Service children on roll. For a 'cluster' application, one nursery setting, or the local authority, would need to be the lead applicant.

What organisations are eligible to apply?

We can accept applications from settings which offer group-based childcare. You must have 50% Service children on roll (for settings with small cohorts below 50%, you can apply as a 'cluster'), and be registered with, and inspected by, one of the following.

- Ofsted (England),
- Care Inspectorate (Scotland),
- Care Inspectorate (Wales)
- Early Years Teams within Health and Social Care Trusts (Northern Ireland).

We can also accept applications from local authorities that wish to supply specific training to early childhood education and childcare providers supporting Service children aged 0-5 years. Appropriately constituted organisations which provide training for setting staff to support Service children may also apply.

There is more information available within the programme guidance.

We are a private limited company, can we apply?

Yes, applications from private limited companies that have been registered, and been working in the Early Years sector, for at least three years may be considered. However, they will be subject to additional eligibility and monitoring checks. This is explained further in our programme guidance.

We have a small number of Service children in our setting, can we apply?

You can apply, but only as part of a cluster (group) application. The Early Years programme is specifically for Service children. Non-Service children do not qualify for support under this programme and any benefits to non-Service children should be incidental. The funded activity should mainly support Service children.

There is more information, for settings with small cohorts (below 50%), available within the programme guidance.

Can we work with external consultants or other organisations to help deliver our project?

Yes. You can work with external organisations to help you deliver your project. If you would like to work with other organisations, then you need to tell us about this within your application. If you plan for any of the funding you are requesting to go to another organisation to help you deliver your project, then you will need to put a partnership agreement in place. There is more information in the 'working with other organisations' section of our guidance.

We are an Early Childhood provider, with over 50% Service children on roll, but we are registered overseas. Can we apply for funding under this programme?

No. We can only accept applications from organisations that are registered in the UK and meet the eligibility requirements, set out above.