

A 'service child' has a parent or parent(s) who is / are service personnel serving:

- a) in regular HM Forces military units
- b) in the armed forces of another nation and stationed in England
- c) exercising parental care and responsibility

Please note that reserve units are not classed as the regular armed forces.

The service children indicator is only relevant to children whose parents are designated as personal category 1 or 2 which are shown on the [GOV.UK website](#). However, all parents will be aware of their personal category. From the above link you will see the following definitions:

Personal category 1 (PStat Cat 1)

Those in PStat Cat 1 will meet one of the following qualifying criteria:

- a) a legally married member of the armed forces, who lives with their spouse, or who would do so but for the exigencies of the armed forces
- b) a member of the armed forces, who is registered in a civil partnership in accordance with the civil partnership act 2004; or is in a civil partnership under an overseas scheme recognised under that act; and who lives with their registered civil partner; or who would do so but for the exigencies of the armed forces

Personal category 2 (PStat Cat 2)

Those in PStat Cat 2 will be a member of the armed forces who has parental responsibility within the terms of the children act 1989 for a child(ren) and who satisfies all of the following conditions:

- a) can properly be regarded as the centre and prime mover in the life of the child(ren)
- b) provides a home where they normally live with the child(ren) except where unable to do so for reasons attributable to their service in the armed forces
- c) provides, where the child(ren) is unable to care for itself, a child carer who can look after the child(ren) during their absences attributable to their service in the armed forces. The child carer must not be the other natural parent of the child(ren). The other natural parent should normally only have staying access to the child(ren) for an aggregate of 56 days in any 12 month period. Staying access greater than this may render the service person ineligible for PStat Cat2 (these restrictions on access do not apply while on recognised unaccompanied duty)
- d) accepts financial responsibility for the child(ren)