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Right then, fall into line you 'orrible little pupils! Government wants the military to run state schools

By [Kirsty Walker](#)

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The Armed Forces will be drafted in to run state schools under plans to drive up discipline and respect in classrooms.

Ministers are in talks with defence chiefs about taking over a handful of schools and turning them into military academies.

Alongside daily lessons, pupils would be expected to take part in activities such as drills, uniformed parades, weapons handling and adventure training.

The first state schools set to gain 'military academy' status are understood to be based in Portsmouth and Colchester.

The controversial scheme will initially be in areas where there are a large number of military families, but is set to be rolled out across the country.

Ministers believe that children in failing schools would particularly benefit from a military-style education because it would give them role models and a more structured existence.

But the plan is likely to raise fears among teaching unions that the academies could turn into tough 'boot camps' or recruiting stations.

Last year, union leaders accused the Army of giving children 'misleading propaganda' about life in the Armed Forces.

The National Union of Teachers also vowed to back any teachers who wanted to boycott the services' recruitment drives.

The latest idea comes as the Government prepares to launch a major extension of the 'school cadet force' scheme in deprived areas.

Gordon Brown is a strong supporter of the military's involvement in schools, which he believes teaches young people discipline and pride their country.

The first academy school dedicated entirely to the Armed Forces was announced last week, giving the Ministry of Defence a role in state education for the first time.

The Duke of York's Royal Military School in Dover, which offers boarding places for the children of military personnel, will also offer 200 extra places to youngsters from non-military backgrounds.



Instilling discipline: This Sergeant Major during an Army Cadet Training College exercise could become a common sight in state schools



Force for good: The military could teach misbehaving pupils lessons in respect

But senior Whitehall sources have revealed that the Army is looking at taking over a secondary state school in Portsmouth, while the Parachute Regiment is considering running a secondary school in Colchester.

Last night, critics of the scheme cast doubts over whether the over- stretched Armed Forces have the funding or resources to take on extra educational responsibilities.

The sources also stressed that no pupil would be forced to take part in any activity against their will.

One said: 'This is not about teaching pupils to shoot people. The Armed Forces can be a force for good in our schools and teach important skills including teamwork and respect.'

Schools Minister Jim Knight said: 'Academy status for the Duke of York's is ideal and will mean they can continue to march to the beat of their own drum by retaining their military ethos and curriculum.'

'I hope this is just the beginning of an even closer relationship between our Armed Forces and schools, particularly with providing boarding facilities for those families who are often on the move and in garrison town communities.'

However, David Laws, Liberal Democrat Education spokesman, called the policy 'yet another Labour gimmick'.

'While many schools would no doubt benefit from a dose of Army discipline, there is real doubt as to whether this is a clear policy or just another Gordon Brown gimmick,' he said.

'Hazel Blears recently warned against Government gimmicks but it seems as though the Prime Minister has yet to take note.'

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what about their yuman rights - does this mean they wont have any under the Army scheme? Lets hope the little darlings wont be offended by a bit of old fashioned discipline. Better idea - get the welfare centric parents to sit in get the same lessons.

- David, Adeaide Australia, 08/5/2009 14:26

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"sources also stressed that no pupil would be forced to take part in any activity against their will." If thats the case, then what's the point? The little darlings will still be allowed to do whatever they please. Our useless whimpy teachers and leaders will never get anything right. and in a few more years another generation of undisciplined, uneducated and unemployable children will hit the streets and all the handwringing will start again.

- Richard, Godstone, England, 08/5/2009 14:25

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The military does not work the THE STATE. It works for the Crown in order to protect the people. The first rule of communism and National Socialism : use the military to control the people. Anyone remember Hitler, Mao, Stalin, Pol Pot.?

- Unbeliever, PR. China, 08/5/2009 14:15

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Even this uniform in the picture is like KGB uniform.. I cannot imagine how people can be so shortsighted.. Just couple of decades ago we had dictators next to us and now when here they start doing the same things people just accept it.. What is it that you don't understand about dictatorship? You give all your rights to the government, that watches everything you do through all those CCTV, and you're happy about all of that.. Maybe then Stalin and others were doing the right thing killing people or taking away all their rights because then people were disciplined? No they weren't! But you're still buying everything government say.. How unthinking people can be?

- Scary, Bradford, 08/5/2009 14:14

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What a brilliant idea. We could also create some military style prisons on the school grounds and rather than put the naughty kids into detention, have the military police frog march them straight into prison. This is what will bring back discipline and more importantly respect for authority.

- Steve, Birmingham, UK, 08/5/2009 14:09

Click to rate Rating 16

What an excellent idea.

- Susan, Scotland, 08/5/2009 14:04

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